Essays
On The History of Sindh

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The new history creates an image of the vanquished from its own angle and the defeated nation does not provide any opportunity to defend or to correct historical narrative that is not in its favour. As a result, the construction of the history made by the conquerors becomes valid without challenge.

A change comes when nations fight wars of liberation and become independent after a long and arduous struggle. During this process, leaders of liberation movements are required to use history in order to fulfil their political ends. Therefore, attempts are made to glorify the past to counter the causes of their subjugation. A comprehensive plan is made to retrieve their lost past and reconstruct history to rediscover their traditions and values and strengthen their national identity.

However, in some cases subject nations are so much integrated to the culture of their conquerors that they lose their national identity and align themselves with foreign culture. They accept their version of history and recognize the aggressors as their heroes who had liberated them from their inefficient rulers and, after elimination of their out-dated traditions, introduced them to modern values and new ideas. Having these notions of foreign culture, they no longer take any interest in their history and traditions. They adopt a different point of view of history after rejecting the past and concentrate on the present and regard the arrival of conquerors as the harbinger of a new age.

These two different points of view divide the society into two antithetical groups; one who refuses to recognize foreign culture and values and makes efforts to conserve and preserve their own identity the other group, after breaking their relations with their indigenous culture,

integrate with the foreign culture and assume the role of modernizers.

They believe that their culture has lost all energy and vitality, and is not in a position to adapt in a new atmosphere and help the society to progress. The conflict between forces of continuity and modernity in most cases remains unresolved, but keeps the society moving.

CHUCHNAMA

Muhammad Ali Kufi translated the *Chuchnama* (The History of Sindh) from Arabic to Persian in 1216 A.D. The name of its author remains unknown. However, some scholars have made an attempt to trace and determine the name of the author on the basis of the style of writing, and have reached the conclusion that it might be written by al Mad'ini. The *Chuchnama* has an important place in the historiography of Sindh, as it provides a brief history of Sindh before the Arab conquest and how they conquered this part of the Indian subcontinent. The history is written from the angle of the Arab conquerors, and the point-of-view of the vanquished is obviously neglected. An analysis of the text shows how the conquerors justify their invasion and condemn the defeated one.

As it is a well-known fact that every invader tries to find out moral justification of his invasion so the *Chuchnama* is no exception. It is argued that the Chuch family were not legal rulers, but usurped the throne by making conspiracy and deprived its lawful ruler from the throne. Therefore, the expulsion of such a ruler from power is morally justified.

Secondly, Raja Dahar's image was depicted in such a way that he appears as a man who has the lust for power

and is morally corrupt. He married his own sister just to save his throne, as astrologers predicted that her husband would become the king. Therefore, such a person did not deserve to be a ruler.

The *Chuchnama* also narrates the stay of Muslim women and children captured by sea pirates and not released in spite of Hajjaj's request to Dahar. That became the main cause for the invasion. However, there is no mention of the economic motives of the Arabs, who wanted to dominate the Indian Ocean for the safety of their trade and commerce.

The battles that were fought between the Arabs and the people of Sindh are depicted as a conflict between 'the just and the unjust' or between 'truth and falsehood' (*haq-o-batil*). On one side were the forces of justice, while on the other were those who oppressed and exploited their own people. Raja Dahar is referred to as infidel and accursed. In the eyes of the Arabs, he was the symbol of evil and darkness. On the basis of these differences, it was concluded that the Arabs were supported by divine power, while infidels were condemned to lose. There are many examples of how the army of Islam was saved from catastrophe due to Divine blessing.

Once a tribal leader, Kaka bin Kotal, made an attempt to destroy the Arabs in a night attack, but he lost his direction and his army wandered here and there the whole night. When he concluded a peace treaty with the Arabs, he confessed that: "God misled them in their way, so they were wandering about the whole night in darkness and chagrin; and that the astrologers and credible persons of his country had found out by their calculations of the stars that this country would be taken by the Muhammadan army. He had already seen this miracle, and he was sure

that it was the will of God, and no device or fraud would enable them to with stand the Muhammadan".

There are many references in the *Chuchnama* in which the Sindhis confirmed that their astrologers predicted their defeat and, therefore, they had no choice but to surrender and recognize Arab rule. One of its examples is the Brahman who left the fortress of Debal and joined the Arab forces because he saw the Arab conquest had Divine support. He told them that the fortress could be occupied by demolishing the temple where a flag was hoisted. The Brahman referred to Muhammad bin Qasim as a 'just leader'. So, on the one hand, were the predictions of astrologers that convinced the Sindhis of their defeat and on the other was the belief of the Arabs that God was on their side and they would win because of Divine guidance. Therefore, once the country was conquered, they became its legitimate owners and had the right to rule the country and to acquire its wealth and resources as 'war booty'.

However, the country was not conquered easily. Raja Dahar fought bravely and died fighting the Arabs. It meant that Sindh was occupied after resistance and not peacefully, that gave them the legitimate right to occupy and rule over it. Historians, after analyzing the *Chuchnama,* have reached the conclusion that it is a mixture of history and myth. Most of the terms that are used in it did not exist during the Arab rule, such as *shahna* that was used during the time of the Suljuq period. The term *iqta* started to be used during the Buide rule. Similarly, to sew criminal in the raw hide of an animal was the custom of the Mongols. So, the whole story that Muhammad Bin Qasim was sewn up in rawhide as a punishment was not correct. He died as a disgraced person in prison (some historians believe that he committed suicide).

Sindh was the only part of the Indian subcontinent that was conquered by the Arabs. Later on, when it was ruled either by the indigenous rulers or by the kings of the Turkish origin, Muhammad bin Qasim disappeared in the history books. He was resurrected in the 1920s when communalism spread throughout India and history was also communalized. The Muslims invented a history which provided them pride and strength to their identity. They started to call Sindh as 'Dar-us-Salam' (entrance to Islam) and made Muhammad bin Qasim as the young hero who defeated the armies of the infidels and converted Sindh as a Muslim part of the Abbasid Empire.

The image of Muhammad bin Qasim and the Arab conquest of Sindh changed after 1955, when one unit was declared and Sindh became a part of West Pakistan. Sindhi nationalism emerged as a response and attempts were made to reinterpret the history of Sindh. The voice of the vanquished, silenced by historians was heard in the writings of the nationalist leaders of Sindh. They changed the character of Muhammad bin Qasim to that of an aggressor and invader who invaded Sindh without any moral ground. Raja Dahar assumed the role of a hero who died defending his country.

It also changed the beginning of history from A.D. 711-12. Instead, the history of Sindh began from the Indus Valley civilization. Interestingly, the past that was once regarded un Islamic and of no importance became a matter of pride. It secularized the historiography of Sindh.

Sindhi culture through history

There are two important factors that caused nations to suffer in the past: internal crises that led to civil wars and rebellions in which powerful groups or individuals tried to

dominate politically by challenging central authority. Consequently, these conflicts either ended up in establishing a strong central government after subduing warlords and rebel groups, or led to disintegration and partition of a country.

Civil wars always caused immense economic and social problems to common people when different warring factions plundered, robbed and looted their belongings, and left them in a state of chaos and confusion. The insecurity that prevailed as a result of chaos forced them to migrate to safer places, further weakening the social structure of the society and disturbing the daily routine of life.

The other factor that had a great impact politically, economically and socially was the invasions of foreign powers. In case of their military victory and occupation of a country, the first task of the occupying power was to change the whole structure of the state. All important and key posts were assigned to their followers and the local administrators and office holders were pushed into the background. Only those who collaborated with them were given some share. The result was that this collaboration promoted opportunism. Those who changed their loyalties took care of their own persons, rather than the country or nation. In such a structure that was dominated by foreigners and invaders, a gap was created between rulers and the local people. Therefore, to keep people under control, coercive and despotic methods were adopted and all oppositions and rebellions were crushed with an iron hand.

Moreover, there was cultural and social impact of the foreign rule. Invaders brought their own culture and traditions along with them. As a result, the integration of foreign and local elements created a new culture that was patronized by the ruling classes. In this case, the local culture receded to rural areas and was saved there by peasants and nomads.

It divided the country politically as well as culturally.

Keeping in view this background, we find that Sindh experienced both problems: the internecine wars and the foreign invasions. Both contributed to change its political, social and cultural structure. As a result, its identity shaped and reshaped, that ultimately weakened its social values and cultural roots.

As long as Sindh remained a part of the Arab Empire, it remained neglected in Arabic historical narratives. With the end of the Habari Dynasty (854-55 to 1010), it relations with the Arab world came to an end. In the mediaeval period, when North India was ruled by the Sultans and the Mughals, the history of Sindh was interpreted from the angle of Delhi. Though there were two local dynasties, Summa and Soomro, there is such paucity of material that it is difficult for the historians to write a comprehensive history of these dynasties. In the 18th century, the Kalhoras (1700-1782) came to power, but failed to maintain the independence of Sindh and were forced to pay tribute to the Afghan king. The Talpur rule (1759-1843) ended as a result of British conquest and Sindh became a part of Bombay presidency and hence lost its independent status.

It is a phenomenon of history that ruling dynasties have constructed history according to their own perspectives. The same tradition was followed by the ruling dynasties in Sindh. For example, when the Arghuns and Turkhans (1520-1592) came to power after defeating the Samma dynasty, they made an attempt to leave no trace of the past rulers. When, on their turn, the Mughals defeated the Turkhans, they disappeared in oblivion and history was re-written from the Mughal point-of-view. The defeat of the Kalhoras and ascendancy of the Talpurs again changed the perspective and the Kalhoras were condemned as intriguers and despots, who treated the Talpurs badly which

caused their collapse. The British viewed the Talpurs as inefficient and barbarians who wasted their resources on their hobbies and took no steps to improve the life and condition of their people.

Another significant aspect of the history of Sindh is that though it was ruled up to 1010-11 A.D. by Arabs, Sindh resisted adopting Arabic culture and language. When the Muslim ruling dynasties came to power in North India, Sindh followed the tradition and adopted Persian culture, with Persian becoming the court language. The immigrants from Central Asia and Iran strengthened the culture of the ruling classes. However, in spite of domination of Persian culture, common people retained their local cultural traditions and continued to speak Sindhi.

The reason for resisting foreign cultural influence was that the population of Sindh was divided in different tribes and scattered in desert and rural areas. They had rare contacts with the rulers and their courts. The tribes who were nomads were more or less beyond the reach of the administration. They did not bother of governments' laws and retained their independence and kept their local customs and practices. The areas where there was cultivation, the rulers settled tax matters through local intermediaries and *zamindars.*

This isolation immuned them from any impact of court and its culture. Thus, they preserved their identity by protecting local culture and traditions. In fact, the people of rural areas kept Sindhi language and culture alive, while the inhabitants of cities integrated them with foreign culture.

Historiography of Sindh

National and regional historiographies have two different characteristics: national history describes historical facts around the nation and its centre; regions remain on periphery and do not get full and detailed historical treatment. On the other hand, regional histories concentrate on their areas and assert their regional identity in order to get a distinguished place in the national history. Hence, national and regional histories have different motives: national history makes an attempt to integrate all scattered and separate elements into one and under one identity while regional histories project their cultural traditions and values in order to play independent role in their own affairs.

After the emergence of new countries as a result of decolonisation and the change of old boundaries, sometimes, contradictions appeared between the nation state and its provinces. Regions had their separate history and culture, while a new nation state required constructing its history from a new perspective. These contradictions between the two create problems when national history is used for political domination, for projection of national identity and suppression of regional nationality.

Keeping this view in mind, when we analyse the national and regional histories of Pakistan, we find that at the time of independence there were 5 provinces which had their own separate identity. Pakistan was a new country and as such it concentrated its attention to construct a nation by integrating all nationalities. Therefore, in the early period

of its inception more emphasis was on nation rather than on nationality. Showing any affiliation to a province was officially criticised and condemned because it was regarded an obstacle in the way of nation making.

The study of historiography of Sindh reflects the political vicissitude and change in Pakistan's political process. With the change in the political set up, the writing of the history of Sindh was also changed. One should keep this fact in mind that Sindh, like other provinces of Pakistan, was not divided like Bengal and the Punjab. Neither the Sindhi speaking were populated in two different countries as the Pushtuns in Afghanistan and the Baluchis in Iran. On the other hand, historically and geographically, Sindh kept its separateness and identity from time immemorial. This made it a distinct province than the others.

History is a powerful tool which gives any region a historical status by tracing its roots. Realising it, the Sindh Historical Society was established before the partition to reconstruct the history of Sindh. Its historical journal published research articles on different aspects of history of Sindh. Especial emphasis was given on the ancient period in order to prove that historically, it was a very ancient area[1]. As the Hindu and English historians were more active in the society, there were secular trends in the writing of history.

After the partition, the historiography of Sindh emerged with new ideas and trends. The central point of it was that historically, culturally and linguistically Sindh is different than other provinces. The emphasis on provincial identity was the outcome of the results of the partition. It made Sindh politically weak as Karachi, its significant town and port, was declared federal territory and made

capital of the new country. Sindh protested against it but it was of no avail.

Secondly, the Hindu population of Sindh migrated and their place was taken by the Urdu speaking. This process weakened the Sindhi nationality. To counter the cultural and linguistic invasion, their intellectuals turned their attention to reconstruct the Sindhi history in order to assert and maintain their separate identity. To fulfill this object, the Sindhi Adabi Board was established with the purpose to promote Sindhi language and to encourage research in history. The Board, soon after its establishment, decided to publish a comprehensive history of Sindh in 9 volumes from the ancient to the modern period. It also decided to publish the original Persian sources of the history of Sindh to provide basic material to the historians. Some of these books were later on translated into Sindhi and Urdu languages. The Urdu translations opened vast avenues to the Urdu speaking to know and understand the history of Sindh.

After the partition, one of the main characteristic features of the historiography of Sindh was the role of Islam in the history of Sindh. The Arab conquest of Sindh made it the "Door of Islam" (*Bab ul Islam*). Its conqueror Muhammad b. Qasim became the foremost hero because he brought Islam to Sindh and blessed it with the true religion. For the Islamists both the conquest and conquerors became great symbols of its Islamic character. Henceforth, *Bab ul Islam* has become a day which is celebrated every year to commemorate the arrival of the Arabs to Sindh.

A noted Islamic writer Saiyyid Suleman Nadvi in his book titled "*Relations between Arab and Hind*", points out the difference between the Arab conquest and the conquests of North India by the Turks. According to his

arguments, the Arabs, who conquered Sindh, were fully aware of the Islamic teachings because they lived in the Islamic environment. On the other hand, the Turks, the Afghans and the Mughals who conquered North India were Muslims only by name. They were not well versed in Islamic teachings and, therefore, were not the true representatives of Islam. Neither their administrative and ruling methods had anything to do with Islam[2].

According to this point of view, the region of Sindh has a sound Islamic character as compared with other regions of Pakistan. Its Islamic position was further strengthened when Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in one of his speeches, paid tribute to Sindh that in actuality Pakistan came into existence on the very day when the first Muslim stepped on the soil of Sindh. After the partition, the Islamic character of Sindh made it distinct to the other provinces as the inheritor of the true Islamic traditions and because it was converted by the Arabs, descendents of the holy Prophet, while the other regions of Indian sub continent were inheritors of the Turkish and Mughal legacies which were different than the Islamic one.

The other feature in the historiography of Sindh is the emphasis of Sindh's contribution to the freedom movement and the establishment of Pakistan. The people of Sindh actively took part in the Khilafat, Hijrat, and Silken handkerchief movements. This involvement in the freedom movements brought them in contact with the Muslims of India. Their struggle to make Sindh separate from Bombay greatly helped the Indian Muslim, demands for their rights.

Sindh also proudly claims its contribution for the struggle for Pakistan. In 1938, Sheikh Abdul Majid Sindhi presented a resolution for Pakistan in the meeting of the provincial Muslim League that was passed by the majority.

In 1943, Sindh Assembly passed the Pakistan Resolution with enthusiasm. On this occasion, G.M. Saiyyid delivered a speech in which he pointed out that the Muslims in India were a separate nation because they had a separate history, culture, literature, traditions and different political and economic systems. Therefore, by recognizing their separate status, they should be granted a separate homeland[3]. Sindh Assembly was the first that supported the Resolution in 1946. In 1985, '*Mehran*', the journal of the Sindhi Adabi Board, published a special issue on 'the Freedom Movement'. In its editorial it is said that 'the real creator of Pakistan is Sindh[4]. However, it is lamented that after the establishment of Pakistan, its role in the struggle is intentionally minimized. The editorial gives some examples of this that how the birthplace of Muhammad Ali Jinnah which is Jhirak, is ignored and replaced by Wazir mansion Karachi; how the role of Sindhi leaders is ignored and their services are not recognized in the creation of Pakistan[5]. To fill this gap, the journal devoted its special issue to highlight the role of Sindh in the Freedom Movement and the role of its leaders in making Pakistan.

The reason why Sindh asserted its Islamic character and its role in the Freedom movement was that it wanted provincial autonomy and minimum role of the centre to play in its internal affairs...

Radical change occurred in the historiography of Sindh when in 1965, One Unit was declared and the four provinces of Pakistan were joined into one. As a result of it, Sindh found itself in the same situation when it was a part of the Bombay Presidency during the colonial period. Instead of Bombay, it was now dominated by Lahore. The province lost its political independence again. The process of One Unit also exposed the opportunistic nature of some of its politicians, who, with the collaboration of the central

government, helped to make Sindh a part of One Unit. At the same time, there also emerged those leaders, who, by opposing the whole process, greatly suffered. The implementation of One Unit provided 'traitors' and 'heroes' to the history of Sindh.

Making of One Unit helped Sindhis to become politically more mature because Sindh, as a whole, suffered under the political rule of the Punjab. During this period, the fertile land of barrage was allotted to the army officers and high ranking bureaucrats depriving the Sindhi peasants of their rights. In the government services, Sindhis did not get their share, which created disillusionment among the growing middle class. Facing these problems, they realized that neither the status of Sindh as *Bab ul Islam* nor their contribution to the Freedom movement and the struggle for Pakistan helped them to get their rights. On the other hand they were exploited and consequently made more backward than before. These feelings changed the whole historiography of Sindh. The emergence of Sindhi nationalism became the central point to analyse and judge the past in the light of the present. Especially, the affects of the foreign invasions were assessed and analysed that how, from time to time, Sindh suffered as a result of foreign domination. The theme of foreign domination created a new image of Sindh which was oppressed and exploited by the foreigners. The second element which was highlighted was the role of the 'traitors and heroes' in the history of Sindh[6]. It was an effort to give role models to the new generation. The lesson of history is that traitors are condemned while heroes are adored and worshiped. The choice was obvious for the people of Sindh.

The new historiography that was reconstructed under the Sindhi nationalism was secular and not religious. The roots of Sindhi culture and civilization were traced in

the ancient past and claimed that its civilizational status was as high as Babylonian, Assyrian or Egyptian civilizations. The Indus valley civilization became a matter of pride for the Sindhis. Mohenjo Daro became a symbol of Sindhi past.

G.M. Saiyyid introduced some very important trends in the historiography of Sindh. One of his arguments was that the Arab conquest of Sindh was not a blessing for Sindh. On the contrary, Muhammad b. Qasim was an aggressor like any other who plundered and looted the resources of Sindh. To justify his arguments, he used the same logic as was applied by Suleiman Nadvi regarding the Turks invaders. G.M. Saiyyad wrote that the Arabs in the 8th century and by coming of Umayyid dynasty to power had lost the true Islamic spirit and became mundane and imperialist, therefore, the Arab conquest had nothing to do with Islam. It was an expansion of an Arab Empire which had no connection with Islam. This interpretation transformed Muhammad b. Qasim from a hero to an aggressor and Raja Dahar, a defender of motherland, who sacrificed his life in fighting rather than compromising to the invaders[7].

G.M. Saiyyid also criticised the historical sources such as *Chuchnama* or *Jannat al Sindh* which praised and adored the invaders. In his opinion, these histories are like opium, which intoxicate the readers and deprive them of true historical consciousness[8]. He asserted that all those foreign conquerors who conquered Sindh were usurpers and oppressors. There should be no distinction because of their religion. They include Dara of Iran, Muhammad b. Qasim of Arabs, Mahmud of Ghazni, Alauddin of Delhi, Shah Beg Arghun of Qandhar, Khankhanan of the Mughals and Charles Napier of the East India Company[9]. All of

them belong to the same category of invaders and devastators of Sindh.

After 1956, the political situation demanded that the history of Sindh should be written in the rhythm of traitors and heroes. Those who sold Sindh for their personal gains and those who sacrificed everything for the cause of the motherland. Those who defended Sindh were Raja Dahar, Dudu Soomro, Darya Khan, Makhdum Bilawal, Shah Inayat, and Hush Muhammad. Among the traitors were Qazi Qazan, Nao Mal and Mir Ali Murad. The message that was conveyed in the new historiography was that battles for independence of Sindh which were fought in Kech-Makran, Thatta, Miani, and Dabba are not over. The war is going on and it would be fought in every city and village[10].

What were the affects of the foreign occupation on Sindh during the Mughal period? On this theme Sindhi Adabi Board published an original source *Tarikh-i-Mazhar-i-shahjahani* by Yusuf Mirak in 1962. Its introduction was written by Pir Husamuddin Rashidi. Writing the introduction, he especially selected those events of oppression and exploitation which reflected the present position of Sindh. He, quoting the author, narrated that how the governor of Siwistan got pleasure flogging and torturing people. There was no body who could redress the grievances of people[11]. It became daily routine of the Mughal officers to confiscate people's property, to deprive them of their resources and wealth and to patronize robbers and dacoits. There were so many taxes imposed on people that it became impossible for them to survive. The result of this loot, plunder and exploitation was that the whole region of Siwistan was completely devastated and destroyed. Towns and villages became deserted. People were so helpless and despondent that they started to leave

their homes and hearth and took refuge in far off areas. All this happened and no one came for their rescue[12].

The resistance against the foreign occupation was also reflected in the historical novel of Usman Diplai who published his *Sangarh* in 1962. The theme of the novel is based on the struggle of the Hurs against the British. He successfully conveyed the message to the new generation of Sindh how to fight against political domination and for their rights.

It was also regarded important to describe the past glories of Sindh in order to create among its people a sense of pride. The symbols which were selected were Mohenjo Daro, the tomb of Jam Nanda, Ranni Kot and Umar Kot forts, the wind catchers (*Badgirs*) of Hyderabad, *Ajrak*, *Ralli*, tiles and the furniture of Hala[13]. Among the literary figures were Shah Latif, Sachal and Sami who enriched Sindhi language and created consciousness of Sindhi nationalism. It was asserted that the base of Sindhi nationalism is not on religion but on the language and region. All those who are living in this region and are speaking Sindhi language are Sindhis. By rejecting the two-nation theory, it based its concept of nationhood on secularism.

However, it should be pointed out that in order to write history in the nationalist framework, facts are distorted and adjusted to fit in it. Moreover, historical methodology is not fully applied and the whole history is narrated with emotions and inflated sentiments. The main motive of the history writing was to use it politically.

The result is that the historiography of Sindh stopped at this stage. It became stagnant. It absorbed the new ideas as far as they served the interest of nationalism. Academically, it did not progress. It did not investigate and

probe the new themes in the history of Sindh. For example, the changes in agricultural setup, development and introduction of new technologies, role of the peasants and are there any peasant rebellions? If not why? Sindh and its relations with neighbouring countries, its cultural and commercial links with them, the *Amils* and *Bhaiband* of Sindh and their social role, the role of religion in Sindh with reference to the Nanak Panthis and the Sikhs need to be researched. Recently, C. Marcovits has written a very informative book *The Global World of the Indian Merchants (1750-1967)* in which he describes the commercial activities of the Shikarpuri and Hyderabadi merchants, an interesting theme which was ignored by the historians of Sindh.

History of Sindh is still incomplete and requires that it should be liberated from the narrow and chauvinistic nationalism. It should be written not only to serve politics but also to create broader historical consciousness that could help people understand past as well as present.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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[3] *Mehran* (Special issue on Freedom Movement) Sindhi Adabi Board, Jamshoro, No. 1-2, 1985, pp. 17-18.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
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[7] Abdul Wahid Arisar, *G.M. Sayyid* (Sindhi), Manzurabad (?), p. 56.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 63.
[11] Husamuddin Rashidi, Introduction (Urdu): Tarikh-i-*Mazhar Shahjahani*, Sindhi Adabi Board Hyderabad, 1962, p. 21.
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[13] Arisar, pp. 62- 63.

Nasir Al-Din Qubachah (1206-1228)

Nasir-al-Din Qubachah, who ruled Sind from 1206 to 1228 A.D., played a significant role in the history of Indian Sub-Continent. Although his kingdom was short-lived, yet his achievements in the cultural fields are remarkable. He patronized the scholars and *Ulama* from Khurasan, Ghaznin and Ghur, who took shelter at his court after the Mongol upheaval. Even when his kingdom was merged in the Delhi Sultanate, these scholars continued their scholarly activities under the Sultans of Delhi and richly contributed to the history, traditions (*hadith*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and literature.

The personal end of Qubachah was pathetic. He fought for his survival against his powerful rivals and died; but what he left in the cultural field is still alive and reminds us today of his work.

Slave Institution of Sultan Mu'izz al-Din Ghuri

The foundation of the Turkish slave institution was laid down during the Abbasid period. In the later Abbasid period, from this institution emerged many prominent slave dynasties such as the Tulinids and the Akhshids, who played a significant role in the history of Islam.

This early institution provided a model to the new emerging Muslim dynasties whose rulers used to keep the

slaves as their personal bodyguards and appointed them on high administrative posts. Yaqub b. Layth (868-878) had nearly 2,000 slaves, who served him as his personal servants and bodyguard. His brother Amir (878-900) had a practice to purchase the boy slaves and trained them in various arts and crafts. He posted them in the army of his commanders where they acted as spies[1].

The Samanids, Qarakhanids, Ghaznavids and the Ghorids followed the same traditions and developed the institution of slavery for the establishment and consolidation of their rule. The Turkish slaves became famous soldiers and administrators. They excelled in loyalty and faithfulness. As the number of the slaves increased, they were divided into different categories according to merits. Besides general slaves there were *Ghulaman-i-Khas* or *Gulaman-i-Sultani*, who acted as personal servants and the bodyguard of the sultan[2].

These slaves were purchased from the markets of Transoxiana by the rulers and the nobles. It was also the custom to give slave as a present to the sultan. Those who were captured in wars were also to become slave. There were slave markets throughout the Eastern Empire where the Turkish slaves were sold on high and low prices according to their physical appearance and the intellectual qualities[3]. These slaves were trained in different arts. However, there was no such elaborate programme to train them systematically. If they were lucky and were purchased by a kind hearted and rich man, they could study along with his children, and if had talents, they could find means to rise into prominence. Their rise, however, depended not on favouritism but on their inherent and acquired qualities.

Once a slave entered the service of the sultan, he was appointed on his personal service such as the *saqi-i-*

khas (royal cup bearer), *chashnigir* (taster), *tashtdar* (ewer bearer), *yuzban* (keeper of hunting panther), *mạshaaldar* (lamp bearer), and *chatrdar* (parasol bearer), and *jamadar* (wardrobe keeper). If they showed talents and efficiency they were promoted to higher posts and were awarded fiefs. The highest post for them was the governor of a province or the commander of the imperial forces.

The Ghurids inherited the Turkish slave institution from the Ghaznavids and used it efficiently for the foundation and extension of their Empire. Sultan Mu'izz al-Din Ghuri (1174- 1206) had only one daughter and no son. He was very fond of purchasing the slaves. Whenever he heard the fame of any new slave, he endeavoured to get him at any cost. Minhaj Siraj writes:

> "He had a great fancy for purchasing Turkish slaves, and he bought a great number of slaves of that race. Every one of them acquired renown throughout the whole of the countries of the East for activity, warlike accomplishments, and expertness[4]."

Once somebody asked the sultan that who would succeed him and keep his name alive after his death? The sultan remarked, "Other monarchs may have one son, or two sons; I have so many thousand sons, namely, my Turkish slaves, who will be heir of my dominions[5]". What was predicted by the sultan, proved correct. The Mu'izzi slaves not only kept his name alive, but played an important role in the history of India and Afghanistan.

Sultan Mu'izz al-Din loved his three slaves: Taj al-Din Yilduz, Qutb al-Din Aybak, and Nasir al-Din Qubachah more than the others. All the three rose under his patronage and were appointed on high and important posts.

Before his death, all the three were the governors of the different provinces of his newly conquered territories.

Taj al-Din Yilduz was purchased by the sultan in his early age. As he showed marks of loyalty and faithfulness, he, from they very beginning, was appointed on responsible posts. By dint of merit he rose and became the chief of the slaves. Later on, he was given Kirman and Sanqaran as fiefs. It was the practice of the sultan to travel every year to Hindustan and on his way back make stay in Kirman. Yilduz used to arrange a feast in the honour of the sultan and distributed one thousand robes of honour (*khil'at*) and caps (*kulah*) among the nobles[6]. Last time, when the sultan visited Kirman, he selected a robe and a cap for himself, and awarded his own dress (*Malbus-i-khas*) to Yilduz. He also conferred upon him the black canopy (*Nishan-i-Siyah*) to indicate his intention to appoint him as his successor[7].

The other favourite slave was Qutb al-Din Aybak. He was purchased by Qadi Fakhr al-Din b. Abd al-Aziz in Nishapur. He was educated along with his children. Later, he was brought to Ghaznin where he was purchased by the sultan. Although, physically he was not well built and handsome, he had other excellent qualities. The sultan favoured and trusted him. He became *amir-i-akhur* (in charge of the royal stable)[8]. The sultan after the conquest of India, appointed him the viceroy. In this capacity he displayed his qualities as general and administrator.

Nasir al-Din Qubachah[9]

We do not know the early history of Nasir al-Din Qubachah, about his family, his tribe, where he came from? And how he became the slave? But he was an intelligent and clever man. Minhaj Siraj writes:

"He was endowed with very great intellect, sagacity; discretion, skill, wisdom, and experience[10]."

Qubachah served Sultan Mu'izz al-Din in different capacities. Probably, he might have started from the lowest rank and gradually promoted to the higher ranks. The working in the different departments and on different posts gave him the opportunity to learn about the administration and the army. This provided with him vast field to display his qualities and assert his importance to his fellow slaves[11].

After the death of Malik Nasir al-Din Aitmar[12], who was the governor of Uch and Multan. Qubachah was appointed in his place. In this capacity he enjoyed the trust and confidence of the sultan.

Sultan Mu'izz al-Din wanted to unite his favourite slaves in matrimonial alliances, therefore, he ordered Yilduz to give in marriage two of his daughters to Aybak and Qubachah[13]. Qubachch also married two daughters of Aybak. From the eldest daughter was born a son, known as Ala al-Din Bahram Shah. He was a young handsome man inclined towards ease and pleasure[14].

During the lifetime of the sultan, the unity among the three was maintained, but after his death, the aspiration for more power, made them thirsty of each other's blood. Qubachah, however, remained friendly towards Aybak, but his relation with Yilduz were deteriorated and they fought each others on the occupation for Lahore.

Division of the empire after the death of Sultan Mu'izz al-Din Ghuri

After the death of the sultan, the nobles of Ghaznin invited Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Mahmud Sam, the nephew of the late sultan, to come and occupy the throne, but he declined that offer and preferred to remain at Firuz Kuh, the capital of the Ghurid dynasty, and entrusted the Empire of the sultan to his slaves. Accordingly, he sent a letter of manumission to Yilduz with a robe of honour. Yilduz, after getting the letter and authority, occupied Ghaznin.[15] Similarly, Qutb al-Din Aybak received the letter of manumission, the title of the sultan, a parasol (*chatr*) and other royal insignia. He proclaimed himself the independent ruler of Hindustan.[16]

In case of Qubachah we did not find any reference whether he received such royal patent or royal emblem. However, during the lifetime of Aybak, according to the advice of Sultan Mu'izz al-Din, he remained loyal to him and visited him from time to time from Uch. In theory, Uch and Multan remained a province of the Delhi Sultanate. After the death of Aybak, Iltutmish on this ground, refused to recognize the independence of Qubachah and treated him as his tributary.

Qubachah assumed independence

After the death of Aybak, Qubachah freed from the pledge of Sultan Mu'izz al-Din and assumed independence. He refused to recognize the sovereignty of Aram Shah, who immediately succeeded Akbak. He regarded himself the rightful ruler of the province which was given to him by Sultan Mu'izz al-Din[17].

Uch and Multan were already in his possession. He further extended his Sultanate and occupied all the forts and towns in the territories of Lahore, Tabahinda (Bhatinda or Sarhind) and Kuhram as far as Sursuti. On the other side he captured Siwistan (Sehwan) and Debel. Thus as far as the sea coast all the fortresses and cities of Sind were conquered by him. He fought against the Sumras and crushed their power so that they were reduced to peasantry and retired to the forests[18].

The seven rulers (Ranas) of Sind, who ruled the different parts of the country recognized the over lordship of Qubachah and paid him tribute. According to the *Tuhfat al-Kiram* and the *Tarikh- i-Lubb-i-Sind*, these rulers were: Rana Bohner (Bhahtar Salta Rathar) of Derbela; Rana Sinar (Sihar), son of Dhamach Korija or Samma race, ruling Tung and Tafta in Rupa (it was the parganah between Shikarpur and Jacobabad); Rana Jaisar, son of Jaja Machi Solangi, of Manktàra; Rana Wakhiya, son of Pannu Channa, of Dera Siwi; Rana Channa, son of Daitha Channa, of Bhagni (Bhagnari); Rana Jiya, son of Warya Jaham of Himakot (between Kotri and Thatta); Rana Jesudhan of Main Nangar of the district of Banbharan Wah (Brahmanabad).

The possession of the vast territories made Qubachah a powerful and resourceful ruler, and consequently a dangerous rival to Iltutmish and Yilduz. He assumed full independence, adopted the title of the sultan instead of Malik, and used parasol (*chatr*) signifying his kingship.

His Capitals

Uch and Multan were the capitals of the chief cities of Qubachah's sultanate. Uch became a populated and

important town because of the political changes. When Mahmud of Ghaznin invaded Multan second time and devastated it, the rich and the well to do persons of the city migrated to Uch and settled there. Since then it became a big town[19].

During the Ghaznawid period Shaykh Safi al-Din Gazaruni (d. 1008) reached Uchh and founded there a monastery (*khanqah*) and a religious seminary (*madrassah*). The school became very famous and contained 2,000 students from different parts of the Islamic World[20]. Uch became the centre of learning and its two schools, Gazaruni and Firuzi, were famous as seats of learning and scholarship[21].

Sultan Mu'izz al-Din conquered Uch from the Bhatiya ruler and gave it to Aitmer, in his fief. After his death it came under Qubachah and became the chief city of his Sultarnate.

Multan, another important and strategic town, was conquered by the Ghurids in 1186. It also came under Qubachah. After assuming independence, it became second important town of his kingdom. Soon it developed and became a religious, literary, and cultural centre and was called the Qubbat al-Islam.

His Coins

Qubachah struck coins as an independent king. These coins bore Hindi and Arabic inscriptions which shows his religious toleration and political sagacity[22].

His Court

The Mongol invasion uprooted the Muslim kingdoms in Khwarizm, Khurasan, Iran, and Afghanistan. As a result of the pillage and devastation, a number of leading nobles, scholars, *ulama*, and mystics came to India. As the roads from the Northwest of the Punjab were not safe due to the Khokhar tribes, who did not allow anybody to pass safely, these people came to Uch and Multan. As a result of this migration, many reputed people settled in both cities. Qubachah, not only welcomed them but provided them all kind of facilities and awarded them generous grants. There were such a galaxy of prominent scholars, literary personalities, and famous *ulama* that his court excelled to that of Delhi[23]. When Qutb-al-Din Kashani, a leading religious scholar arrived in Multan, Qubachah built for him a religious school[24]. Similarly, when the famous historian Minhaj Siraj reached Uch from Khurasan in 1226, the Madrassa-i-Firuzia was given under his supervision. He was also appointed as a Chief Qadi in the army of Ala al-Din Bahram Shah, the son of Qubachah[25]. Besides these two there were number of scholars of repute who were patronized by Qubachah. The famous poet Sadid al-Din Ufi, the author of *Jawama al-Hikayat,* and *Lubab al-Albab* reached his court in 1227, he was patronized by the Wazir of Qubachah, Ain al-Mulk Fakhr al-Din. The Wazir was the friend of scholars and the famous history of Sind, *Chachnamah* or *Fathnamah* was translated by Ali Kufi under his patronage[26]. Among the poets we find the names of Shams al-Din Muhammad al-Katib, Diya al-Din Al-Sajazi, and Fadl Multani.

His Conflict with Yilduz and Iltutmish

The occupation of Lahore, Tabarhinda, Kuhram, and Sursuti by Qubachah, his extension of the Sultanate,

and the growing political power alarmed Yilduz and Iltutmish, because both of them regarded themselves the heirs of Sultan Mu'izz al-Din's Empire and therefore, could not tolerate any other powerful and independent ruler. Qubachah came into conflict with Yilduz on the occupation of Lahore, but he was defeated by the general of Yilduz, Khwajah Mu'id al-Mulk Sanjari. After his defeat, he abandoned it and concentrated his power in Sind[27]. According to Firishtah, Yilduz's army attacked Uch and Multan, but it was repelled by Qubachah[28]. When Yilduz was finally defeated by Iltutmish (1215-16) and taken as a prisoner; Qubachch occupied Lahore, which brought him into conflict with Iltutmish. In 1216 at Chamba the encounter between Qubachah and Iltutmish took place, in which Qubachah was defeated and escaped to Lahore. "His standards, drums, and camp equipage, besides immense booty, fell into the hands of the Royalists"[29]. Qubachah then escaped to Uchh. Iltutmish did not follow him there. There were reasons why Iltutmish did not crush his power at this stage? Firstly, Qubachah was powerful in Sind. He had vast resources and manpower. He was popular, and in case of war, Iltutumish, was not sure to win it. Secondly, Iltutmish was himself not fully secure and his presence was demanded at Delhi. Therefore, the final encounter was postponed for the next year.

Jalal al-Din Khawarizm Shah in Sind

Qubachah had the energy and vitality to survive against his two rivals, Yilduz and Iltutmish. He had founded his kingdom in Sind and defeated all the powerful rulers and the Ranas. He, although a foreigner in Sind, yet he gained the popularity and respect of his subject. He maintained peace and security which provided impetus to agriculture and consequently the prosperity of the peasants. His revenue was thus plenty to maintain a magnificent

court and he was in a position to help the scholars and the foreign nobility, who took shelter at his court. He was powerful enough to repel any invasion of Iltutmish. But there came an unexpected calamity. Jalal al-Din Khwarizm Shah, after the repeated defeats by Chingiz Khan, crossed Indus and entered the Indus valley. It is a great irony of history that a person who himself was defeated, saw his country devastated and ruined by the Monglos, witnessed the massacre of innocent people, and wandered from one place to another, the same person brought calamity and misfortune to Sind. Instead of securing a shelter, a place of refuge, and a safe corner for him and for his men, he started to fight, conquer, and occupy the cities and towns. He, within a short span of time (1221-23), reduced the country into ruins.

Jalal al-Din, after his arrival, made an alliance with the Khokhar Raja, whose name was Rai Saknin Khokar. The Raja had enmity with Qubachah, therefore, he requested Jalal al-Din to take action against him. On his initative, Jalal al-Din sent Uzbek Pa'i against him. He surprised Qubachah and attacked him near Uch. Qubachah was defeated and escaped by boat to Bhakkar and then to Multan. Uzbek captured the camp of Qubachah and sent the news of the victory to Jalal al-Din, who came and stayed in Qubachah's camp[30].

Jalal al-Din sent an ambassador to Multan demanding from Qubachah to send the son and the daughter of Amir Khan who after the battle of Indus took refuge at Qubachah's court. He also demanded money. Qubachah, to avoid the war, complied on the understanding that his territories might not be invaded[31].

Jalal al-Din left Uch and went towards Balala and Mankala to spend the summer. While he was in Sialkot, he

received the news of the Mongol army, sent by Chingiz Khan in his pursuit. He returned and when he reached Multan, he demanded money from Qubachah, who refused to comply the demand this time and advanced to fight against him. Jalal al-Din, avoided the war, and went to Uch. The citizens of Uch, in absence of their ruler, offered stubborn resistance and refused to surrender. Jalal al-Din, in fury, burnt the town and left towards Sadustan (Sehwan)[32].

Fakhr al-Din Salar was the governor of Sehwan on behalf of Qubachah. Uzbek Khan, the commander of Jalal al-Din, defeated him and occupied the town. When Jalal al-Din arrived, Fakhr al-Din submitted and presented himself before him, "with his sword (round his neck), and clothed in shroud". He was pardoned and reinstated on his post[33]. Jalal al-Din stayed there for a month and then marched towards Thatta. On the way he committed all kinds of cruelties: massacring, pillaging and plundering every town which belonged to Qubachah[34]. He occupied Thatta in 1223 and plundered the environs of the city. He also looted the city of Debal[35]. When he departed from Sind, he left it ruined and burnt.

The Mongol Invasion

Jalal al-Din also brought the Mongol hordes, who came in his search to India, and not finding him, plundered the country. The Mongol invasion was the last nail in the coffin of Qubachah. Chingiz Khan sent Taribi Nuyan against him. He came to Multan and besieged the fort which was continued upto 40 days. He demolished some gates and was going to capture it, but the excessive heat forced him to retire and leave the country. He left Multan unconquered but devastated the whole province. Qubachah, during the siege, resisted and opened the doors of the royal

treasury and lavishly distributed the money among the people of the city. "He gave such a proof of resolution, energy, wisdom, and personal bravery that it will remain on record till the Day of Judgment"[36]. Salar Ahmad, the governor of Kalinjar[37], wrote Qubachah that how the Mongol ruined his country. Qubachah was much grieved and tried his best to improve the condition of the affected people[38].

Conflict with Malik Khalj

Jalal al-Din left in Sind a part of his army under Malik Khalj. He occupied Mansurah, a district in Siwistan. Qubachah marched against him. He was defeated and slain in the battlefield. After the battle, the remaining soldiers of the Malik Khalj took refuge at the court of Iltutmish, who welcomed them. They fought against Qubachah when Iltutmish attacked him[39].

Conflict with Iltutmish

Qubachah suffered immensely owing to the interference of Jalal al-Din Khwarizm Shah. The country was ruined and he became resourcesless. Iltutmish saw the time more favourable to strike against Qubachah. In 1227 he marched against him and besieged Uch. Qubachah, seeing no hope to win, escaped to Bhakkar. After 27 days resistance Uch surrendered to Iltutmish. Form Uch Iltutmish sent his Wazir Khwaja Nizam al-Mulk Junaydi to Bhakkar. Qubachah, finding himself helpless, sent his son Ala al-Din Bahram Shah to Iltutmish with 100 lakhs Dehliwis[40] and thousand robes of honour. Iltutmish detained him and did not allow him to depart. He was not ready to miss the opportunity to crush Qubachah. This alarmed Qubachah. He, to avoid the conflict, boarded his treasury in the boats and escaped from Bhakkar to take

refuge in some island, but his boat was capsized and he was drowned in the river. Thus ended the rule of Qubachah who ruled Sindh for 22 years[41].

Conclusion

Qubachah was the victim of the circumstance. He had the energy, capability, and capacity to build a country, but wars forced him to abandon all his schemes to promote education and welfare of the people. Qubachah was a good administrator and a patron of scholars, but he was not a good general. Instead of resisting and fighting, he preferred to escape and avoid the wars. He lived in an age where only through military power one could survive, therefore, his good and humane qualities could not protect him from calamities. He failed miserably. With his failure stopped all the cultural and literary activities of his court. Thus his loss became the loss of Sindh and Multan.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] C.E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids,* Edinburgh: 1963, p.99.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 101.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 102.
[4] Minhaj Siraj al-Juzjani, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri,* Kabul: 1923-24. Vol-I, pp. 410-11; H.G. Raverty, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri,* (English translation), Calcutta, 1881, Reprinted Lahore: 1977, Vol-I, p. 497.
[5] T.N., Vol-I, p. 411; Raverty, Vol-I, p,497.
[6] T.N., i, p. 411.
[7] *Ibid.,* p. 412.
[8] *Ibid.,* p. 416.
[9] Raverty, i, p. 581.

[10] T.N., i, p. 419; Raverty, i, p. 531.
[11] T.N., i, p. 419; Raverty, i, p. 531.
[12] Aytam was slain in the battle fighting bravely against the Khwarizm Shah. For further details, see T.N., i, 419; Raverty, i. p, 532.
[13] T.N., p. 411.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 419; Raverty, I, p. 532.
[15] T.N., Vol-I, p. 412.
[16] Muhammad Qasim Firishtah, *Tarikh-Firishtah (Urdu)*, Karachi: 1974, Vol-I, p. 240.
[17] *Ibid.*, Vol-II, p. 893.
[18] T.N., i, p. 419; Raverty, i, pp. 532-33.
[19] For the name of Uchh see Raverty, i.
[20] Muhammad Ayyub Qadri, *Makhdum Jahaniyan-i-Jahangasht*, Karachi: 1963, p. 74.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 76.
[22] E. Thomas, *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, London: 1871, p. 100.
[23] T.N., i, pp. 419-20; Raverty i, pp. 534-39: Mir Ma'sum Bhakkari, *Tarikh-i-Ma'sumi*. Patna: 1938, p. 35.
[24] Muhammad Ayyub Qadri, p. 76.
[25] T.N. i, p. 420.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 454; Sabah al-Din Abd al-Rahman, *Bazm-i-Mamlukiya*, Azamgarh: 1954, p. 50.
[27] T.N., i. p. 411.
[28] Firishtah, ii, p. 894.
[29] Elliot & Dawson, *Taj al-Ma'athir*, ii, p. 240.
[30] E & D, *Jahan Gusha*, ii, p. 396; J.A. Boyle: *Jalal al-Din Khwarazm Shah in the Indus Valley*, Sind Quarterly. Vol-VII. 1979. p. 29.
[31] E. & D, ii, p. 397.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 397.
[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 393-98.
[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 564.
[35] T.N., i, p. 412.

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[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 419-20; Reverty, i, pp. 537-38; Ma'sumi, pp. 34-35.

[37] A strong fortress in the province of Multan. 39. E. & D., ii, p. 565.

[38] E & D, ii, p. 565.

[39] T.N., i, p. 423; Raverty, i. pp.540-41; n. 5; Ma'sumi, p. 35: *Tufhat al-Kiram*, p. 62: *Lubb-i-Tarikh-i-Sind*, p. 38.

[40] Coins of the period struck at Delhi composed of a mixture of silver and copper, Cf. E, Thamas, pp. 10-11.

[41] T.N., Vol-I, p. 420; Raverty, i, p. 420; Raverty, i, p. 624; E. & D., Vol-II, p. 242; Ma'sumi, p. 35.

Lahribandar: A Historical Port of Sindh

Introduction

The seaports of Sind played an important role in its history. They not only broke isolation of the country and brought it into contact with far off countries but also promoted its commercial activities, developed its trade and industry, and provided opportunities to assimilate the foreign culture. Because of the seaports, Sind came into close contact with the coastal towns of India and other countries of Asia, Europe and Africa. During the rule of the Ra'y, the Brahman, and the Arabs, Daybul remained the chief port of Sind where the merchants of different countries brought the novelties of the world. With the passage of time, the political and commercial importance of Daybul declined and for the last time it was heard when Jalal al-Din of Khwarzim Shah invaded it in 1221 and, after its occupation, plundered and devastated it. The decline of Daybul accelerated not because of plundering, but by the natural changes which ultimately choked it and rendered it incapable to receive any ship. However, its slow disappearance gave rise to another seaport which took its place and played a significant role in the commercial life of Sind. Very soon the new port of Lahribandar assumed importance as it was the only port not only of Sind but of North-Western India.

The Name

Al Biruni (d. 1039) was the first who mentioned Lahribandar in his famous *Kitab al-Hind* as Luharani[1] while Ibn Battutah (d. 13770) called it as Lahri[2]. The Portuguese referred to it as Diul-Sind or simply Diul. It appears that the name of the ancient port Daybul survived even after its disappearance and Lahribandar for sometimes continued to be called as Daybul or Deval. Thomas Roe (1615-18), the English ambassador at the court of Jahangir, whenever referred to the port called it Syndu[3]. The early European travellers pronounced it as Larrybunder, Laharibandar, Lahoribandar, Bunderlaree, Bunder-i-Sindh, Sindee, Laharia or simply Bandar. Haig is of the opinion that Lahri-bandar derived its name from Lahore, the capital of the Punjab. As the goods from Lahore came to this port for loading, it was mistakenly called by the foreign merchants as Lahoribandar. "The justification of the name lay in the fact that Lahari was the port of the Punjab as well as of Sindh"[4]. The name of Lahoribandar became famous outside Sind. McMurdo points out that the actual name of Lahribandar derived from Lar meaning lower Sind, where the port was situated[5], while Haig asserts that the name derived from Lahar, a tribe of Sind[6].

The Location

The exact location of the port is not determined but the references of the travellers and historians help us to find its whereabouts. Al-Biruni placed it 12 *farsakh* from the port of Daybul[7]. De Laet (d. 1649) writes that the chief port of Sind was Lahribandar (Loure-bander), which was 3 days journey distance from Thatta[8]. The same observation was made by Nicholas Whithington (1612-16) and Thevenot (1670)[9] Manucci (1653-1703) determined its location 12 league upstream from Thatta[10]. Hamilton (1699) tries to

give the exact position of the port by writing that Thatta was about 40 miles from Lahribandar, "which stands about 5 or 6 leagues from the sea, on a branch of the river Indus"[11]. Seth Noamal (d. 1878) points out that Lahribandar was situated on the right bank of the Pitti branch of the Indus, situated among a number of tidal channels connected with the Pitti mouth, the most northern mouth of the Indus, about 16 miles from the sea, and communicating through the Gharo creek with Karachi itself[12].

The Port and the Town

In absence of evidence it is difficult to determine the exact capacity of the port as the how many ships at a time it could accommodate? Abul Fadl (d. 1602) writes that the port could accommodate no less than 40,000 boats[13]. In 1613, Joseph Salbank and Walter Payton, who accompanied Robert Sherley, described the port not large but crowded with ships. On one side of the river were ships and on the other side was wharf[14]. Sir Thomas Herbert, who visited Sind in 1626, reported that "Loor Bunder is the port of it, but ships that lie there are subject to the worm as at Swally, and Goa"[15]. In 1936 President Methwold wrote to the East India Company that "Larree, the port, where all goods which are imported, especially in great ships, are landed"[16]. Alexander Hamilton observed that the port was capable to receive ships of 200 tons[17].

The climatic condition of the port was not favourable and healthy. There were less amenities which created problems for the merchants. Inspite of these drawbacks, the port flourished due to its location and geographical situation.

The port had a small town. In 1333 Ibn Battutah found it a fair town on the coast, where the river of Sind discharges itself into the ocean. It possesses a large harbour, visited by men from Yemen, Fars, and elsewhere.[18] From the report of Ibn Battutah it appears that the port contributed a large amount to the state treasury. The governor told him that the total revenue from the port was about 60 lakh *tankah* yearly[19].

Another prominent vistor was Sayyid Ali Ra'is (d. 1572), the Amir al-Bahr of the Ottomans, to whom the governorship of Lahribandar was offered by Shah Hassan Arghun (1522-1554) He refused the offer as he had no intention to stay in Sind[20]. Abd al-Rahim Khankhanan (d. 1627), after his victory over Jani Beg (d. 1600), visited Lahribandar. He sailed to Muhira, which was situated in the middle of the sea (20 *kuruh* from the bandar). As the party embarked upon, the rough sea upset the boats, and the Khankhanan apprehended that he might be attacked and killed by Jani Beg. He was, however, assured of his safety. After spending the night on the island, next day he returned to Lahribandar[21]. The purpose of the Khankhanan's visit to Lahribandar was to bring the port under direct royal control and to prevent any contact between the Tarkhans and the Portuguese. It was feared that the Portuguese might be called by the Tarkhans to help them against the Mughuls[22].

After the arrival of the European merchants, the revenue of Lahribandar increased, and owing to its importance and wealth, Akbar (1556-1665) made Lahribandar as *Khalisah Jagir* (crown property)[23]. The total revenue received during the reign of Akbar from the port was 5.521, 419 *dam*[24]. Later on due to the influence and power of Nurjahan (d. 1645) the port was bestowed on Asif Khan (d. 1641)[25]. When the English merchants desired to set up a factory there, they were favoured by Asif Khan and

nearly half of the custom duties were remitted by him on the English goods[26]. The favour and patronage of Asif Khan encouraged the English to establish commercial relations with Sind.

The English factors arrived in Lahribandar in 1635 and found that the accommodation was cheap, fish and fruits were in abundance. Chicken was available at the cost of 4 paisa and the price of a sheep was a rupee. Rice and butter were also cheap[27]. They found that "the town is well inhabited, the houses being most of mud, supported with such poor timber that it is a wonder how they stand".[28] Nearly all the houses had wind catchers (*badgirs*). William Fremlin after his arrival, reported to the Surat Council about the town of Lahribandar:

> "There is poor fisher town at the entrance into the river....We arrived at Bunder about midnight where we found diverse Portugal frigates and other vessels of this country some loding and some unloding"[29].

When Alexander Hamilton visited Lahribandar in 1699, the port and the town was reduced from significance to poverty. He found it:

> "It is but a village of about 100 houses, built of crooked sticks and mud; but it had a large stone port. With four or five great guns mounted in it, to protect the merchandize brought thither[30]."

The greatness of Thatta was also due to the port of Lahribandar, as most of the principal merchants preferred to reside in Thatta, which was safe and provided all amenities of life. The port of Lahribandar in the later days was not safe and the Baluchi tribes used to plunder it from

time to time. The fort and its garrison protected the merchants and their goods from plunder. It appears that the route from Lahribandar to Thatta was also not safe and the gangs of marauders looted the people and caravans on the way. Such incidents show lack of administration and loose grip of the government to control the routes.

The administration of the port and the city was in the hand of the Shahbandar or Mirbandar, the officer incharge of the harbour. It was his responsibility to collect revenue and custom duties. He checked the illegal trade and smuggling. *Tarkih-i-Tahiri* (1621) gives interesting detail of the administration to the port:

> "Between the port and the ocean there is but one inhabited spot, called Sui Miani. Hence a guard belonging to the Mir Bandar, or port-master, with loaded piece of ordinance, is always stationed. Whenever a ship enters the creek, it intimates its approach by firing a gun, which is responded to by the guardhouse, in order, by that signal, to in form the people at the port, of the arrival of a strange vessel. These again, instantly send word of its arrival to the merchants of Thatta, and then embarking on boats, repair to the place where the guard is posted. Ere they reach it, those on the look out have already enquired into the nature of the ship. All concerned in the business, now go in their boats, (grabs) to the mouth of the creek. If the ship belongs to the port it is allowed to move up and anchor under Lahori Bandar; if it belongs to some other port, it can go no further, its cargo is

transferred into boats, and forwarded to the city[31]."

Besides the Shahbandar, another officer of the port was Nakhudah, who was an employee of the government and got the salary of rupees 300[32]. There was a customhouse in an open if place upon the riverside. "Betwixt it and the town is two flight shot"[33]. The goods, after unloading, were assessed by the custom officers, and duties were levied on them. The custom duties and rates were fixed and written down in a book and could not be changed or altered[34]. Recende writes that the taxes were paid in coins at the customhouse. The usual rate was 3 ½ [35]. However, the corruption was rampant among the custom officials. The Portuguese and the English merchants bribed them to save the custom duties. As the Portuguese were the first who arrived at Lahribandar, they were favoured by the local authorities. Only when the English merchants brought *parwanah* (official letter) from Asif Khan, they were treated well. In 1636, William Fremlin appreciated the friendly attitude of the authorities and informed the Council of Surat: that the governor "exceedingly desires a continued settled residence there, commanding our favourable reception and accommodation"[36]. The Dutch trade mission was also welcomed and well received by the Shahbandar[37].

The main export from Sind through Lahribandar was textile taffetas of yarn and silk, indigo, saltpeter, sugar, leather goods, ornamented desks, writing cases and similar goods inlaid with ivory and ebony, quilts, and mattresses. The goods which were imported were pearl from Bahrain, gold and silver which was brought by the Portuguese, drugs, and dates.

The port of Lahribandar connected Sind and the Northwest India from important coastal towns of India and

the Persian Gulf. Hence as Sorley points out, a coastal trade flourished with Basrah, Bandar Abbas, Mascut, Konkun, and Bahrain and with the Gu arat Ports of Cambay and Surat[38].

The Portuguese and the English at Lahribandar

The first European nation that came to Lahribandar were the Portuguese. In 1355, they were invited by Mirza Isa Tarkhan (d. 1565) to help him against his rival. They left Sind after plundering Thatta and Lahribander[39]. Next time when they arrived they controlled the port because they were the only one who exported the Sindhi goods through Lahribandar to the Persian Gulf, Gujarat and Goa[40]. They were so powerful at the port that all attempts of the English failed to dislodge them. Thomas Roe testifies to the hold of the Portuguese over Lahribandar by writing that "Syndu is possessed by Portugal"[41].

The Portuguese merchants and the missionaries settled at Lahribander. Recende, who visited the town, observed that near the custom house lived two Augustinian priests, although they got their payment from the Portuguese King, they derived their income from the alms received by the Portuguese residents of the town who lived in hired houses. The port town according to Recende had a number of Prostitutes[42]. Manucci who visited Sind in 1655, saw a barefooted father in the town[43].

The English factors on their arrival found a number of the Portuguese ships at the port and the Portuguese "feytor" or agent resided there to look after their interest. There were also 3 or 4 *Padres*[44]. The Portuguese were alarmed on the arrival of the English and unable to thwart

their presence, threatened the local merchants not to load their goods in the English ship[45].

The first English ship that came to Lahribandar was "The Expedition." It brought the famous English adventurer Robert Sherley to the port in 1613[46]. He tried to establish commercial relations with Sind but failed due to the staunch opposition of the Portuguese. From 1616 to 1630, the English continued their efforts to set up trade with Sind and succeeded only in 1635, when a peace treaty was signed between the English and the Portuguese. In the same year the first English ship was dispatched to Lahribandar with a letter from Asif Khan[47]. The "Discovery" under William Fremlin landed at Lahribandar in December, the same year. The Shahbandar sent his son to welcome Fremlin. They were provided the best accommodation for the residence and 7 horses for travelling[48]. The Shahbandar also sent them goats, hens, meat, flour rice, butter, and sugar[49]. After the arrival of the English, the Portuguese lost their influence and their place was taken by the English who carried on extensive trade till the closure of their factory in 1662.

Decline of Laribandar

The importance of Lahribandar was reduced after the fall of Ormuz (1635)[50]. But nature proved more formidable enemy than the political change. By the middle of the 17th century, it started to deteriorate as a result of silting. In 1625, Prince Aurangzeb, the governor of Multan, ordered to develop a new port known as Aurangbandar or Kukrallah. It appears that the port was abandoned at the end of the 18th century owing to the shoaling of its entrance. Nathan Crow, who visited Sind in 1799, reported that Lahribandar was chocked and deserted. With it ended the historic role of Lahribandar[51].

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[8] De. Laet, *The Empire of the Great Moghul,* Bombay: 1928, p. 68.
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The Portuguese In Sindh

The Portuguese came to India at the end of the 15th century and soon established their commercial and political power in the sub-continent. The occupation of Goa in 1510 provided them the capital for their Eastern dominions. Diu, Daman, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul, Bombay, San Thome, and Hugli became the Portuguese settlements from where the Portuguese went to every part of the sub-continent to explore the possibilities of trade, to convert people to Christianity, and to get employment at the different courts of Indian rulers. Patronized by the Mughul emperors and influential nobles, they got commercial concessions, and expanded their activities and power. But after some time they seized control over the sea routes and stopped all the merchants of other nations to pass without their permission. Even the Mughul ships of pilgrimage were not safe and required the Portuguese pass for safe conduct. They were also intolerant in religion and followed the policy of forcible conversion. Consequently this weakened their position at the Mughul court[1].

The Portuguese in Sind

The Portuguese were the first among the European nations to come to Sind. In 1555, they were invited by Mirza Isa Tarkhan (d. 1566-67) to help him militarily against his rival, Sultan Mahmud of Bhakkar[2].

The Portuguese Governor, who was at Bassein, looking for an opportunity to extend the Portuguese

influence, readily accepted the invitation and agreed to send military help to the ruler of Sind. The Portuguese had already gained commercial and territorial advantages by giving such help to the Indian rulers. By helping Bahadur Shah of Gujarat (1526-1537) against Humayun, they occupied some important coastal towns in Gujarat particularly Diu. They also expected, by giving military help, to get some political and commercial concessions from Mirza Isa. Therefore, seven hundred Portuguese soldiers were sent in 28 ships under the command of Pedro Berreto Rolim. When the Portuguese reached Thatta, they found that the civil war was over and their military help was not needed any more. The commander, however, asked for his expenses. As Mirza Isa was not present at Thatta, his request was not accepted. Berreto in revenge, ordered plundering of Thatta, which was the capital of Sind and an emporium of trade. As a result eight hundred people were killed and the property of more than two millions was captured and loaded in the Portuguese ships. On his way back, he also destroyed everything on both sides of the Indus[3]. Thus, the Portuguese left bitter memories for the people of Sind.

The next reference about their presence in Sind, we find in a letter written by Robert Sherley, who pointed out that 800 banished Portuguese were in Bengal and Sind. They were those who were expelled by the English and had taken refuge in far off provinces[4]. Sind, however, became an important commercial region for the Portuguese. In 1633 more than 21 boats containing 200 Portuguese arrived in Sind. As there were no pirates in the Persian Gulf, the Portuguese boats had few soldiers[5].

After their establishment in Ormuz, the Portuguese fully controlled the area of the Persian Gulf and Sind. The Mughul government in Sind, benefiting by their trade,

patronized them and provided them many concessions and privileges. They carried the trade from Sind to the Persian Gulf and in the South to Gujarat, and Goa[6].

After getting permission from the Mughul government, they set up their factory at Thatta, where their factors resided and looked after their commercial interests, and the Portuguese agent collected money on outgoing and incoming ships[7]. He also settled the disputes among the Portuguese community in Sind. The Portuguese government paid no salary to the agent. He had 40% of income from what the local administration gave him. The rest was paid by the Portuguese living in Sind. However, his income was good as he was allowed by the local authorities to make wine and sell it in the market. However, it appears that the Portuguese were not respected because they treated the local population badly and threatened the local administration to call their navy and destroy the port. They also avoided to pay the custom duties by using various fraudulent ways[8].

In 1634, when Bantam was again raised to an independent Presidency, an agency was established at Thatta to promote the trade[9]. The presence of the Portuguese brought the people of Sind into contact with the Portuguese culture. The business community and the custom officers used to speak Portuguese language. An Englishman, who came with Robert Sherley in 1613, writes, "yet the officers, being for the most part Banies spoke good Portuguese".[10]

The Portuguese Missionary Activities

The Portuguese were zealous Christians and wanted to convert the people of South Asia to their faith. In Sind also we find references about the Carmelite mission, which

was founded in 1625 by Pere Johannes a Jesu Meria, who sent to Sind Pere Ludovicus, and Francis a Matre Dei[11]. However, Pedro de Recende, who visited Sind in the 17th Century, writes about the mission and its followers whom he saw in Thatta:

> "In this great city of Sind there is a church of Carmelites who walk about bare foot and are well behaved. They do not convert any natives because none becomes Christian. However they are a great help to the Portuguese. There are two Carmelite priests who live on alms from the Portuguese with which they live quite happily[12]."

Manucci, who visited Thatta in 1665, saw a barefooted Carmelite father who resided in a little hermitage[13]. Once the Muslim population of Thatta ransacked the church, probably due to the missionary activities of the mission, but later on the church and its property were returned to the mission. The mission was abandoned at some date previous to 1712[14].

The Portuguese also shared in founding the Augustinian mission in Sind. Manrique, who visited Thatta, met father Jorge de la Natividad who was Superior to the mission. He discussed with him about the rebuilding of the church, which had been destroyed[15].

Rivalry Between the Portuguese and English

The first English man, who came into contact with the Portuguese in Sind, was Anthony Starkey, who died in 1612 at Thatta and whose papers were captured by the Portuguese and were sent to Lisbon[16].

The first English ship, which came Laribundar in 1613, was "The Expedition". It was commanded by Christopher Newport and carried the famous adventurer, Robert Sherley, who was at that time Persian ambassador. Robert Sherley took the advantage of his position and negotiated with the Mughul governor for establishing a factory in Sind. While the conversation was going on between the governor and Sherley, the Portuguese were also in the room and disturbed the meeting by speaking against the English. The governor became angry on the interference and expelled them from the room. But it seems that the Portuguese had great influence in the government because the governor, later on, told Sherley that if the English gave him assurance of good trade and profit, only in this case he would not care for the Portuguese. The governor further told the ambassador that the Portuguese trade brought him one lakh rupees annual profit. If the English trade brought more profit, then the permission to establish a factory would be granted. As Robert Sherley came to Sind accidentally and without any planning, he failed to give such assurances and the first attempt to set up an English factory in Sind failed[17].

The short stay of Robert Sherley brought the rivalry between the English and Portuguese into light. The Portuguese were naturally apprehensive, in presence of the English, of losing their trade, therefore, they used all possible methods to deter the English to come to Sind. During his stay, movements of Robert Sherley were watched by the Portuguese. N. Whittington, who travelled from Surat to Thatta, to see Robert Sherley, met a Bania on his way:

> "He tould mee how Sir Robert had been much abused at Lowrybander, both by the governor and the Portungalles, and how the

> Portungalles came on shore in the night and fyred Sir Robert's house[18]."

The Portuguese besides diplomatic manouverings, also threatened militarily. They collected their frigates in order to block the sea mouth[19]. They also managed, with the help of the custom officers, to harass the English by checking them. When Payton and Salbanck were searched thoroughly in the presence of the Portuguese, Payton became angry and said to the custom officers, "Whatever the Portuguese might have done to ordain so bad fashion, yet English merchants did not, meazle like, hide money in their shoes"[20]. At the time of their departure, there was a quarrel between the English and the Portuguese. Payton rebuked them in the Portuguese language, which was understood by the Banias, who were present there:

> "...and I told them that they were shameless and lying people in spreading of so many devised scandals and slanderous reports of our nation Also, I told them that if they did not contain themselves hereafter, both in their sayings and doings, they should be rooted out of Indies and a more honest and royal nation placed in their rooms[21]."

The second phase of the Portuguese and English conflict started in 1616, after the arrival of the English ambassador, Thomas Roe, who advised the Company to trade with Sind. He emphasized to keep in mind the Portuguese influence. In 1617, he writes:

> "The river is indifferently navigable downe; but the mouth is the residence of the Portugalls; returns backe against the streame very difficult. Finally, wee must warrant their goods, which a fleet will not doe;

> neither did the Portugal ever lade or noise (*sic*) such goods, but only for these Sindhi and Thatta, that traded by their own junkes, they gave a Cartas or passe to secure them from their frigats, and traded with them; for which they paid a small matter[22]."

He further writes that "The number of Portugalls residing is a good argument for us to seeke it; it is a signe there is good doing"[23].

In 1620, Thomas Kerridge pointed out the strong influence of the Portuguese in Sind. Every ship from Sind required to have a pass from the Portuguese for sailing[24]. In the same year once an English patrolling fleet in the Arabian sea, challenging the sea power and authority of the Portuguese, captured a Sindhian ship, which was going to Muscat and had the letters and passes from the Portuguese[25].

The English tried form 1616 to 1630 to establish commercial relations, with Sind. But all their attempts failed because of the strong opposition of the Portuguese, who were favoured by the Sind administration and the business community as they brought large profit to them. They depended on the Portuguese ships to carry their commodities outside Sind. They were, however, ready to welcome any European nation, which could give them guarantee for the profitable trade and safe conduct of their Ships.

In 1635, a peace treaty was signed between the English and Portuguese which ended the hostility of both the nations in India. After this the English attempted to trade with Sind, hoping not to face the Portuguese opposition any more. On their arrival, the English found the Portuguese firmly established in Laribundar. The

Portuguese agent (Feytor) resided at the port along with 3 or 4 *Padres* who had "a very means place to exercise their devotion in"[26].

The Sindhi merchants welcomed the English in the hope to send their goods in their ships in order to avoid the duty levied by the Portuguese. The Portuguese, on hearing the news ,that the Sindhi merchants were planning to send their goods by the English ships to Bundar Abbas, came to Lahribundar with 4 frigates and warned the merchants not to load their goods in the English ships. Otherwise they would capture them in the river before loading on the ships.

The English also did not interfere in the matter in order not to annoy their new ally. However, the establishment of the English factory in 1635 proved disastrous for the Portuguese, who lost their political as well as commercial privileges in Sind.

The Portuguese and Dutch Rivalry

The Portuguese also opposed the attempt made by the Dutch to establish commercial relations with Sind. On February 15, 1632, a Dutch vessel came to Sind with the purpose to find out the possibility of trade. The Portuguese strongly reacted and threatened the governor that they would leave Sind if the Dutch were allowed to come to Sind for trade[27]. Recende, giving the Portuguese side of the story writes:

> "Soon the Nawab found them giving trouble and threatening the Mohammedans, he took help of the Portuguese. He said it was impossible for the Dutch and the Portuguese to live together .The Dutch were being badly treated and they soon left the place[28]."

It seems that the Portuguese losing their influence in other parts of India, were determined to keep Sind for them, therefore, they vehemently opposed the English and Dutch to enter Sind.

The Portuguese lost their position and monopoly of the Cape of Good Hope, in the Red Sea, and in the Persian Gulf after the fall of Ormuz in 1635. Consequently they lost their influence in the Eastern coasts due to the Dutch and in the Western coasts due to the English. In Sind, the Portuguese were replaced by the English who, with short intervals, continued commercial and political relations with Sind.

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[22] *Ibid.,* p. 406.
[23] *The English Factories in India,* p. 181.
[24] *Ibid.,* 1618-21, p. 181.
[25] Duarte, p. 15.
[26] *The English Factories in India,* pp. xii, xiv.
[27] *Ibid.,* 1630-33, p. 207.
[28] Recende, pp. 4, 5.

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid In Sindh

A number of works has been written, out of devotion and reverence, on the life and the movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid (d. 1832), but no attempt is made to analyse the movement critically. It is not the scope of the paper to examine the movement in broader perspective of political, social and economic condition of the 19th century India, but to analyse the arrival and stay of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid in Sind and the reaction of the ruling classes and the people towards the movement.

On the eve of his arrival, the rulers of Hyderabad were Mir Nur Muhammad (d. 1833), Mir Karam Ali (d. 1823), and Mir Murad Ali (d. 1837). It appears that the Mirs were well informed about the person and the activities of Sayyid Ahmad through their agents and spies. The Mirs were particularly apprehensive about the expansionist policy of the East India Company and kept all kinds of information about the happenings in the British territories. It was natural that some doubts were created in the minds of the Mirs regarding the movement of Sayyid Ahmad, who recruited the majority of his followers from the British territory and received generous donations to equip his followers to fight against the Sikhs, and in spite of all his military preparations and preaching of the holy war, the British government connived and allowed him to march along with his armed men through the British territories. The rulers of the Indian states, who were completely under the British influence and never dared to annoy them, welcomed him and provided him moral and material

support. Under these circumstances, the Mirs believed that Sayyid Ahmad and his movements were supported by the British government. It was rumoured in Sind, Baluchistan, and the Punjab that he was the British agent and the British were sponsoring his cause. Charles Masson, who was wandering these areas, reported that as Sayyid Ahmad paid his troops in Company's rupees, people believed him an agent of British government[1]. He further writes:

> "It was suspected that he was sent by the Sahib Loghs, by the vulgars, and I was often questioned on the point, but of course was unable to reply[2]."

The arrival of Sayyid Ahmad in Sind and his interview with the Mirs of Hyderabad did not remove their doubts. When James Burnes visited the court of the Mirs in 1827, Mir Murad Ali asked him in one of the Private meetings whether the British government supplied money to Sayyid Ahmad. James Burnes writes:

> "I expressed my wonder that any person, form such an idea, since it was notorious that the Seyud was fighting solely for the faith; but my answer did not seem to convince him as he remarked that though the Bombay government, whose servant I was, knew nothing of the matter, it was probably very well understood at Bengal[3]."

Under these circumstances when Sayyid Ahmad came to Sind in 1826, he was not welcomed here as he expected. Neither he got the volunteers for his army nor the financial support for the movement. He arrived in Sind from Marwar crossing the desert and reached Umarkot as his first stopover in Sind. Soon after his arrival, he sent Haji Abdur Rahim to talk to the keeper of the fort (*Qil'dar*)

and discuss with him for the arrangements of his stay. The *Qil'dar*[4] was suspicious about Sayyid Ahmad's arrival from the British territories; therefore, he refused to allow him and his followers to enter the fort. He took precautionary measures and asked him to stay outside at a safe distance. He was also ordered no to come to the fort and leave the place next day. When some of the followers of the Sayyid approached the fort for the purpose of visit, the soldiers suspected their approach and were ready to fire. When they were assured that their only purpose was to visit the fort, the soldiers allowed them to enter[5].

From Umarkot he reached Karo, there he met Sayyid Choran Shah, a highly respected Sayyid, who presented him a baffalo[6]. Choran Shah told him about the rumours which were circulated throughout Sind that he was an English agent. He proposed that he would introduce him to the ruler of Mirpur in order to remove his doubts[7]. When he reached Mirpur, Mir Ali Murad (d. 1837), did not come to see him. He sent some food and two persons to guide him to Hyderabad[8].

From Mirpur, he went to Tando Allahyar; where two persons came from Hyderabad to investigate about Sayyid Ahmad[9]. From Tàndo Allahyar, he went to Tando Jam and from there he sent a message to the Mirs of Hyderabad informing them about his arrival. The Mirs sent Sayyid Sibghat ullah to receive him. On reaching Hyderabad, he was welcomed by the *Kotwal* of the city, who provided him foodstuff on behalf of the Mirs[10]. Three days after his arrival, he went to the fort to see the Mirs. He was well received and the Mirs gave him some cash and some minor gifts[11]. Some of the courtiers took oath of allegiance (*Bi'at*) to the Sayyid such as Mir Ismael Shah, the *Wazir* of the Mirs, Muhammad Yusaf Khan, a noble[12]. He stayed in Hyderabad for 13 days. He was greatly

disappointed by the cold attitude of the Mirs. He could not get the support and the financial help from them as he hoped. He also abandoned the idea to call his family to Hyderabad. From Hyderabad, he went to Ranipur, Hala, Kot Sayyid, Lalukot, Hangorja, and Pirkot. Sibghat Shah Rashidi, the spiritual leader of the Hurs, who first met him at Ranikot, arranged his stay in his town and provided him all kinds of facilities. Finding him friendly and cooperative, he decided to settle his family there[13]. Pir Sibghat Shah expressed his desire to participate in the holy war against the Sikhs[14]. From Pirkot he went to Rakha, Habibkot, and finally Shikarpur.

His sudden arrival at Shikarpur surprised the people of the town and they mistook him and his followers as a part of Shah Shuja's army, who had left bitter memories for the inhabitants of the city. Therefore, the people and the administration of the town immediately closed the gates and did not allow anybody to come in. Sayyid Ahmad sent some of his trusted men to Agha Kazim, the governor of the town, to give him assurance that he had no relation with Shah Shuja and wanted to stay in the town for only two or three days. The governor then allowed two persons to come in the city for shopping. Later on the city gates of the town were opened and the people of the town came to see him. Agha Kazim[15] also entertained him and his followers and gave him presents to show his devotion. He showed much enthusiasm and promised to follow him along with his army to fight the holy war[16]. At Shikarpur, which was the commercial center of Sind, Sayyid Ahmad bought shoes and clothes for his followers. He left Shikarpur on 20th July 1826 and marched onward[17].

Sayyid Ahmad had high expectations from Sind to get volunteers for his movement and financial aid from the Mirs and the people. The author of the *Tarikh Taza Nawa-*

i-Ma'arik reported that Sayyid Ahmad faced great criticism and opposition in Sind on account of his religious views, as he was known as a *Wahabi*. There were also doubts among the people regarding his plan to fight against the powerful Sikh government with a small number of his followers. There was a general belief that the whole movement had no definite and solid motives except to entangle innocent people in the name of religion[18].

The reason why Sayyid Ahmad and his movement could not attract the people of Sind is found in the different political, social, and economic conditions of British India and Sind. Sind, like India, was not an occupied country, therefore, the people could not be roused and united on any political slogan. The whole basis of Sayyid Ahmad's movement was on religious emotionalism and for the people of Sind this approach had no attraction as they felt economically and politically satisfied and saw no material benefit in goining the movement. Therefore, a section of the people, such as Agha Kazim, who showed sympathy for his cause and promised to join him never fulfilled their promise. Moreover, Sayyid Ahmad's short stay did not give him any opportunity to propagate his religious and political views among the people and win them for his cause.

The attitude of the Mirs was diplomatic. They showed their sympathy in public, but remained very cautious not to involve themselves in his movement. They were not sure of the real motives of the movement and did not like to offend Ranjit Singh, who was very powerful and had the intention to find some pretext to attack Sind.

In 1831, the Mirs, however, tried to exploit the name of Sayyid Ahmad to prevent the mission of Alexander Burnes to navigate the Indus. The Mirs' agent at the court of Ranjit Singh told him that the carriage which

Burnes was bringing for him was full of gold *Mohars* to give to Sayyid Ahmad[19]. The ruse was not successful and the navigation of the Indus was done by Burnes.

Though the arrival and the stay of Sayyid Ahmad had no significance in the history of Sind, but his wars with the Sikhs indirectly affected the course of Sind history. Ranjit Singh was involved in a series of wars with Sayyid Ahmad at a time when he planned to invade Sind. In 1832, when he became free after the defeat and death of Sayyid Ahmad and sought the British consent to occupy Sind, it was refused. Khera rightly observed:

> "The Maharaja was evidently too late, for during the period that he was occupied with Syed Ahmad, the views of the British Government had changed, and they were now 'interested' in Sind[20]."

Thus, Sayyid Ahmad saved Sind from the Sikhs and left it to be occupied by the English.

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[2] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[3] James Burnes, *A visit to the Court of Sind*, Bombay: 1829, Reprinted, Karachi: 1914, pp. 100-101.
[4] Abul Hasan Nadwi, *Sirat Sayyid Ahmad Shahid*, Karachi: 1974, i, p. 361.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 361.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 361.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 361.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 362.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 362.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 363-364.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 264.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 364.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 364-367; Ata Muhammad Shikarpuri, *Tarikh Taza Nawa-i-Ma'arik.*
[14] Nadwi, p. 368.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 369.
[16] Ata Muhammad Shikarpuri, pp. 245.
[17] Nadwi, pp. 369-70.
[18] Ata Muhammad Shikarpuri, pp. 243-45.
[19] P. N . Khera, *British Policy towards Sind upto the Annexation*, Lahore: 1941, p. 12.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Umarkot:

A Historic City of Sindh

Umarkot, though an insignificant town in the desert, has seen and observed many vicissitudes in the history of Sind. Many a time it saw an unexpected invader attacking and occupying it. Many a time it welcomed the helpless fugitives seeking shelter against some powerful enemy. Many a time it witnessed the bloody wars and skirmishes around its ramparts. These varied features of Umarkot give it an important place in the history of Sind. The present paper will only examine the historical events which occurred in or round Umarkot and analyse how this small town played its role in these happenings.

The Town and the Fort

There is a controversy on the name of the town; whether it is Umarkot or Amarkot. In the Persian sources the name is found in both versions: Umarkot and Amarkot. There is one version that the town was built by Rana Amar Sing[1]; in another version it was founded by Umar Sumra[2]. There is a third version put forward by Tod, who writes that Umara-Sumra was the sub-division of the Pramara Rajputs who settled in the Thar desert and inhabited the town which was known as Umarkot[3]. Still the people of that desert

pronounce it as Amarkot, but outside it is popularly known as Umarkot.

Umarkot soon became an important town in the Thar desert and played an active part in the history as it is situated on the high road in Sind from the Eastward[4] and linked the highway between Marwar and the Valley of Indus. This made it the key of the desert and it became strategically and commercially a very significant town[5]. Though it is not certain when the town was inhabited, yet it is sure that it existed in ancient times. Yuan Chwang, who visited India in 641, most likely visited Umarkot, too[6]. It is said that Rana Amar Sing built it in 11th century[7], and the present city was rebuilt on its ancient foundations[8].

There is a small fort, not strong enough to face a powerful army. The present fort was built in 1746 by the Kalhora ruler Nur Muhammad (d. 1755), definitely on the ancient site of the fort which was either built by the Sumras or the Sodas[9]. During the Talpur period 400 soldiers were kept in the fort to defend it in case of any invasion from Jodhpur[10].

Umarkot under the Soda Rajputs

The importance of Umarkot increased when it came under the Soda Rajputs, the tribe whose energy and vitality made Umarkot immortal in the history of Sind. The Sodas, who became the rulers of Umarkot, were the desert people. According to Tod, in all probability, they were the Sogdi of Alexander[11]. He further traces the roots of the Soda tribe and reaches the conclusion that it was the branch of the Pramara Rajputs. Their sub-division was Umara-Sumra, and from this derived the name of Umarkot[12]. In one version the Pramara Sodas, who were living in the Thar desert for many centuries, or some say that they came from

Ujjain, captured Umarkot in 1226 from the Sumras, or it was given to them by the Sumra rulers[13]. But there is a story in Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* which leads us to believe that the fort came under the Sodas before 1226. In 1219, the Rana of Soda came, into conflict with Chachech Deo, who attacked the Rana and took him by surprise. The Rana gathered 4,000 soldiers and resisted the invader. He was defeated and took shelter in his capital, Umarkot[14]. However, Umarkot became the chief town of the Sodas after the occupation and since then it remained under their control in spite of all political changes.

The ruler of the fort had the title of Rana. Though he acted independently, yet acknowledged the over lordship of the rulers of Sind. When Sind was under the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughul Emperors, the Rana paid them tribute. On the succession the new Rana received the recognition either from the Mughul Emperor or his viceroy from Thatta[15].

The Rana of Umarkot had ups and downs in his relations with Jaisalmer, a neighbouring state. In 1219, the Rana had already fought a battle with Chachech Deo. But later on the Rana tried to maintain good relations with the rulers of Jaisalmer, Munjam Rao, son of Mungal Rao took refuge in Umarkot as a result of some invasion to his country. When he became the ruler, the Rana of the Sodas offered him the hand of his daughter. He accepted the offer and the marriage took place at Umarkot[16].

The matrimonial alliance helped the Sodas of Umarkot to protect them from their powerful neighbours. As the women of the Soda tribe were famous for their beauty and charm, the ruling classes of Sind wanted to marry them. There were many instances that the leading

people of Sind during different periods married the Soda women. The Sodas, in return, secured protection and safety.

Umarkot: The Birth place of Akbar

Umarkot has the honour to be the birth place of Akbar. Humayun, after the defeat by Sher Shah, reached there in a state of destitute in 1542. He was received by the Rana of the fort known as Prasad Wirsal. Gulbandan Begam, the sister of Humayun, gives a vivid description of the reception:

> "The Rana gave the Emperor an honourable reception, and assigned him excellent quarters. He gave places outside to the amirs' people. Many things were very cheap indeed; four goats could be had for one rupi. The Rana made many gifts of kids and so on, and paid such fitting service that what language could set it forth[17]."

The Rana vacated the middle portion of the fort for his royal guests. Akbar was, therefore, born inside the fort and not outside as is generally believed[18].

Humayun left the fort as it could not accommodate his army. The Rana helped Humayun against Shah Hassan, who had killed his father, and assisted the Emperor by giving 2,000 or 3,000 soldiers. The help proved ineffective as mutiny broke out in the Rana's army and the soldiers were dispersed[19].

Hamida Banu left Umarkot when Akbar was five weeks old. Akbar never visited Umarkot but he had emotional attachment to his birth place. When Mir Abul Qasim Khan Zaman, from the Beglar family, met Akbar

with Jani Beg, the ruler of Sind, Akbar asked him about his birthplace. He told Umarkot. Akbar was pleased and said, "I and the Sayyid have the same birthplace[20].

Umarkot during the Turkhan Period

During the Turkahn period the Beglar family played an active role in the history of Umarkot. Mir Sayyid Qasim Beglar came from Samarqand to Sind during the period of Shah Hussan of Arghun. He was given the governorship of Umarkot. In this capacity he helped the Soda Rajputs of Umarkot against the Rathors. The Sodas were impressed by his bravery and courage and offered him to marry one of their women. He readily accepted the offer and the daughter of Rana Kuya Wairsi, known as *Rajiya* was married to him[21]. From this marriage was born Mir Abul Qasim Khan Zaman, who became very important figure during the Turkhan period.

After the death of Isa Khan (d. 1527), Mirza Baqi (d. 1585) became the ruler. His younger brother Jan Baba was not happy with him and revolted against him. He, after the revolt, marched towards Umarkot in order to take refuge there. At that time the Rana of Umarkot was Rana Bana (Tata), son of Rana Kanka Waisa (Waisar). Khan Zaman was at that time in the service of Jan Baba, who intended to send him to Umarkot to occupy it on his behalf. When the Rana heard about it, he sent a message to Jan Baba that he was ready to surrender the fort and requested him to send some of his trusted nobles. Jan Baba chose Khan Zaman and Mirza Mazaq for the negotiations. The Rana at the same time dispatched a secret message to Mirza Baqi about the whereabouts of Jan Baba and his intention to come to Umarkot. Mirza Baqi, on receiving the information, suddenly attacked Jan Bana at Nasarpur and defeated him. When this news reached the Rana, he asked

Khan Zaman and Mirza Mazaq not to stay in the fort and leave it immediately. Thus, the Rana, by joining Mirza Baqi, saved Umarkot from Jan Baba[22].

Khan Zaman, later on, joined Mirza Baqi, who ordered him to march against Rana Megraj of Umarkot, kill him and exile his family from the fort. On the approach of Khan Zaman, the Rana was frightened and left the fort along with his family. Khan Zaman easily occupied the fort. After the occupation, he enquired whether there was any capable person from the Wairsi family to whom he could bestow Umarkot? He was told that Rana Bakar Wairsi was the befitting man to be the Rana of the fort. Khan Zaman, therefore, placed him on the post of Rana and himself returned to Nasrpur[23].

Khan Zaman was destined to play another important role in the affairs of Umarkot. As it is referred back, the government of Umarkot was under the rulers of Sind. They bestowed it whomsoever they liked and deprived whenever they thought it prudent. When Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan conquered Sind, he might have heard about the beauty of the Soda women and wished to marry within the family of the Rana. As the Rana of Megraj of Umarkot had no daughter suitable for Khan Khanan, he offered the hand of his brother Man Singh's daughter[24].

The relationship of Man Singh with Khan Khanan put him in an advantageous position. After the death of Rana Megraj, Jani Beg bestowed the government of Umarkot to his son Kishan Das. This created hostility between him and Man Singh, who was aspiring for the post of Rana. Kishan Das, knowing the intention of his uncle, ousted him from the fort and himself assumed all powers. Man Singh could not tolerate the brunt, as he was the father-in-law of the powerful and influential Mughul noble.

He sent his son to Khan Khanan to complain against Kishan Das. At that time Khan Khanan and Jani Beg were with Akbar at Burhanpur. Khan Khanan, after knowing the affairs of Umarkot, requested Jani Beg to favour Man Singh. Thereupon Jani Beg immediately wrote to Khan Zaman to place Man Singh on the post of Rana and asked Kishan Das not to oppose it. Khan Zaman, after getting the order, marched towards Umarkot along with Man Singh. Kishan Das refused to hand over his post to Man Singh and prepared to offer the resistance. At Samara both armies faced each other. As Kishan Das had relations with Khan Zaman, some people tried to stop the conflict and open the negotiation between Kishan Das and Khan Zaman. Kishan Das expressed that he considered himself a servant of Khan Zaman, but Man Singh was responsible for creating all these troubles, and he would oppose that Man Singh, should be placed on the post of Rana. Khan Zaman insisted to fufil the command of Jani Beg and bestow the Ranaship to Man Singh. However, on the persuasion of his friends, Kishan Das came to the camp of Khan Zaman, submitted respectfully, and presented his horse as present. He encamped with Khan Zaman. Apparently all was over, and everybody was happy that the peace was restored. But all of a sudden trouble was started, as some people of the Samija tribe entered the fields of the Sodas and started to pillage and plunder. This brought the two parties into conflict. Kishan Das, in the beginning wanted to fight, but later on he changed his mind and escaped. Khan Zaman marched towards Umarkot. The son of Kishan Das was in the fort, but he was not powerful enough to fight against him, therefore, he took some money and left the fort undefended. Khan Zaman easily occupied the fort and imprisoned the family of the Rana. As the family was related to him, it was treated with respect and was not molested, but the town was plundered and looted by the conquering army regardless of any human feelings. The

temples were demolished, cows were slaughtered, and the inhabitants were tortured and mistreated. Khan Zaman himself passed his time in pleasure and merry-making.

The occupation of the fort, the deprivation of the Rana from his right, and the violation of their religious tenets infuriated the Soda tribe, who assembled under the Rana to take revenge. They made the preparation to march to Umarkot to fight against the army of Khan Zaman, when he received the news, he was greatly alarmed and wished to avoid the war by all means. Therefore, he left Umarkot and marched towards Kishan Das. He reached Gaddi, where the Rana was staying with his army. He sent his son and the nobles to the Rana for negotiations. The Rana was persuaded not to fight and come to the terms with Khan Zaman. After some discussion and assurance, the Rana came to the camp of Khan Zaman and was welcomed by him. The Rana was treated with respect and was awarded a horse, a robe of honour, and some plundered property was restored to him. Thus Khan Zaman settled the affairs of Umarkot peacefully[25].

Umarkot under the Kalhoras

Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), the Mughul Emperor, after the retirement of Sadiq Khan, the last Mughul governor of Sind, gave the country to Nur Muhammad Kalhora in 1736. He had not yet fully established himself that Nadir Shah, on his way back from Delhi, invaded Sind in 1739. Nur Muhammad, in order to avoid the war and to protect himself, escaped to Umarkot. He was sure that Nadir Shah would not dare to cross the desert with his army, and if he would attempt to attack Umarkot, in this case he would take refuge in the desert of Marwar. Nadir Shah proved a man of determination. He was not the man to allow Nur Muhammad to stay in

Umarkot without submission. He immediately marched, reached Umarkot and surprised Nur Muhammad, who was on the point to escape to the desert. It is said that he had already buried his treasure, sent his family to the desert in a safe place, and himself stayed only to manage the conveyance for two lakh rupees. When Nadir Shah besieged the fort and Nur Muhammad saw no hope to escape, he surrendered. When he appeared before Nadir Shah, he was very angry and asked him, "Why have you escaped and taken refuge in this place?" Nur Muhammad replied, "My eight generations have served the Emperor of Hindustan, if I joined your service immediately people would have called me a traitor and a faithless person." Nadir Shah was pleased by Nur Muhammad's reply and awarded him a robe of honour, a horse, and a sword. He also bestowed him his country. Nur Muhammad in return paid one crore rupees and promised to pay him regular tribute[26].

Secured on the throne, the Kalhora ruler tried to consolidate his power and extend his territories. The Sodas of Umarkot were the victim of the political change. They were pressed by the two powerful neighbours: the Rathors and the Kalhoras. As a result of their combined efforts they lost the political authority over Umarkot and the Thar desert. In 1750, Umarkot was finally incorporated into the Kalhora territory and the Rana was ousted from the fort. As it ceased to be the chief town of the Sodas, it reduced to an insignificant town and lost all past glory. The Rana, afterwards, settled in the Thar desert, and the Soda tribe recognized the over lordship of the Rana and paid him tribute[27].

After the death of Nur Muhammad in 1755, Diwan Gidu Mal manoeuvred to place Muhammad Murad Yab Khan on the throne. He was at that time staying in

Umarkot. When the news of his succession spread, all the leading men and nobles went to Umarkot to congratulate him. Muhammad Murad Yab Khan received the news of his succession in Umarkot and celebrated his coronation at Nasrpur[28].

Umarkot saw the drama of civil war between the Kalhoras and the Talpurs. When Mir Bijar, one of the prominent Talpur leaders, came back from the pilgrimage, he came to know about the tyrannies done by the Kalhora ruler to the Talpur family. This made the two parties hostile to each other and an encounter was inevitable. Mir Bijar, to make the preparations, retired to Umarkot and occupied it without fighting[29].

On hearing this news, Taja Laikhi (d. 1782), son of Raja Laikhi, along with Ghulam Nabi, the Kalhora ruler, invaded Umarkot to crush the power of Mir Bijar. He had 30,000 soldiers, yet to fight against Mir Bijar and to occupy the fort with power was not possible. Therefore, he invented a trick to take the fort without fighting. He sent Allah Bakhsh Jahanjan to Mir Bijar, who pretended to be against Taja Laikhi. He complained against him and persuaded Mir Bijar to hand over the fort to the men of Ghulam Nabi as an expression of his loyalty. Mir Bijar, on his advice, left the fort and handed over its keys to Allah Bakhsh Jhanjan[30]. Taja Laikhi immediately sent two thousand soldiers and enough ammunition in the fort to control it. After the occupation of the fort, Mir Bijar was neglected and no attempt was made to negotiate with him. This forced Mir Bijar to declare war against the Kalhoras. The battle took place at Laniyari (near Shahdadpur) in which Mir Bijar defeated Taja Laikhi. Taja Laikhi, after knowing that Ghulam Nabi was in link with Mir Bijar, killed him[31].

Mir Bijar emerged powerful after the conflict. He, however, did not usurp the power and recognized Abdul Nabi as the new ruler of Sind. Mir Bijar regarded Umarkot an important town and in order to have complete control, he ousted the Soda tribe from there. This brought him into conflict with the Raja of Jodhpur, Bijay Singh. The relations were further deteriorated when Mir Bijar asked the hand of one of the Raja's daughters. The Raja took an insult and the war broke out between Sind and Jodhpur[32]. At the same time the Raja got an unexpected help from the ruling family of Sind, who were afraid of Mir Bijar and his increasing influence. A secret message was sent to the Raja that if Mir Bijar was assassinated by him, the fort bf Umarkot would be given to him in return. As a result of this secret pact, Mir Bijar was killed dramatically in 1779 by the two Rajputs sent by the Raja. According to the pact Umarkot was handed over to Bijay Singh[33].

After the possession of Umarkot, Bijay Singh reinstated the Rana of Soda Rajputs in Umarkot and it became one of the *parganas* of Jodhpur. The Rana paid tribute to the Raja of Jodhpur[34].

Umarkot, time and again, provided refuge to the Talpur family against the wrath and conspiracy of the Kalhora rulers. When Abdul Nabi, in his struggle against the Talpurs, sought the help from Timur Shah (d. 1793), the Afghan ruler, he sent Madad Khan to Sind for his help. The Talpur leaders Mir Abdullah Khan, Mir Fath Ali Khan and Mir Ghulam Ali Khan took shelter in Umarkot. Madad Khan plundered and devastated Sind and went as far as Umarkot. The fort, however, saved and protected the Talpurs and in this way helped them to win their battle against the Kalhoras[35].

Umarkot under the Talpurs

In 1783 the Talpurs came into power under the leadership of Mir Fath Ali Khan, who established the political power of the Talpur family. The Talpur rulers, in view of their previous experiences, regarded Umarkot an important town for the refuge, as they feared the Afghan invasion. They thought it prudent to occupy it. They made several attempts from time to time to capture it, but in 1813 Umarkot was finally annexed by the Talpurs[36]. The Talpurs, to check the forces of the Raja, even pushed their army into the territories of Jodhpur[37]. Though Umarkot was recovered by the Talpurs, it remained a bone of contention between Sind and Jodhpur. The Raja never accepted the sovereignty of the Mirs of Sind over Umarkot and claimed it as a part of his state.

When James Burnes visited Sind in 1827, he mentioned Ghulam Allah Laghri, who was at that time incharge of Umarkot[38]. Postans and Burnes point out another important aspect of Umarkot that it served as a place where the treasury of the Kalhoras and Talpurs was hidden. James Burnes writes:

> "Where is reported the members of the Sind government have treasure to the amount of several crore of rupees[39]."

Umarkot under the British

After the battle of Dabo (1843) Sir Charles Napier sent Fitzgerald from Mirpur to Umarkot. It was made as a rallying point by the Talpurs and was strongly garrisoned. When Fitzgerald reached the fort, he found that the rumour was baseless. The fort, after some negotiation, surrendered without resistance. Fitzgerald was appointed as in charge of

the fort[40]. After the occupation of Umarkot, Sind was completely conquered by the Britishers[41].

The Raja of Jodhpur, after the conquest of Sind, opened negotiations with the British government on the issue of Umarkot. He demanded it to be given to him (for details, see appendix).

British government incorporated Umarkot in Hyderabad collectorate. Ten years later it was suggested to give it to the Rao of Kuch, but the proposal was rejected. In 1856 it was finally merged in Sind[42]. In 1859, the Rana of Umarkot, along with some local *Zamindars*, revolted against the British administration. They attacked the telegraph office, killed some policemen, and occupied the town, but action was immediately taken and the revolt was crushed[43].

An event that took place in Umarkot during the British period, though of less importance, yet it brought the name of Umarkot in limelight, was that Eddy Robert, the sixth Commissioner of Sind, held a Darbar in 1867 in Umarkot and Mir Shah Muhammad Khan, a resident of Mirpur Khas, was awarded the title of *Sitara-i-Hind* and a medal[44].

In 1869, a severe famine occurred in Marwar and the Thar including Umarkot. Such was the condition of the people that they sold their children in extreme poverty[45]. In 1876, Sir Charles Temple, the governor of Bombay, who was also a scholar of Persian, in order to know the condition of Sind, also visited Umarkot[46]. In 1889, the eleventh Commissioner of Sind, Sir Charles Pritchard, visited Umarkot[47].

Conclusion

Umarkot, as an isolated fort, situated in the desert, was an ideal place for refuge. So it happened that on different occasions, eminent personalities sought refuge in Umarkot in order to protect themselves from their enemies. The history shows that Umarkot always welcomed them and provided them not only refuge but other facilities. Humayun, Mirza Baqi, Mir Bijar, the Talpur leaders and other prominent persons stayed in Umarkot during the time of trouble. In 1843, after the British conquest, Mir Sher Muhammad Khan went to Umarkot with some army with the intention to fight against them[48]. Thus, the role which was played by Umarkot in the history of Sind, made it one of the significant towns of Sind.

APPENDIX

Selected Correspondence between the Government of Sind and the State of Jodhpur regarding Umarkot.

(From the Selections from the Pre-Mutiny Records of the Commissioner in Sind), pp. 309-338.

NO.444.

Agra, 17th April 1943.

GENERAL

I had the satisfaction of receiving today your letters from the 27th of March to the 3rd of April, both inclusive, eight in number.

Your last letter does not inform me of the abandonment of Umarkot and of its occupation by our Cavalry; but I have reason to think, from report received several days ago from Deesa, that event may have taken place on the 4th.

I apprehend that we shall be able to communicate very rapidly by Jyepore, Ajmere, Jodhpur, Balmeere and Umarkot when we have that latter place. Captain Trench, now at Jyepore, has been written to upon the subject.

The Rajah of Jodhpur is very anxious to repossess Umarkot. It belonged to his Raj till within the last forty years. I should be glad to let him have it, if I were satisfied upon two points, first that he would be able to keep it, and secondly that his occupation of it would not facilitate the smuggling of opium. Upon the latter point I have written to the Governor of Bombay.

I have, & c.,

(sd.) ELENBOROUGH.

No. 610 of 1834

Hyderabad, 26th August 1843.

To,

CAPTAIN RATHBORNE
Collector and Magistrate,
Hyderabad.

Sir,

I have the honour to request that from enquiry among your records or from the old officers of the Ameers, you will acquaint me what lands now of Sind and in the neighbourhood of Umarkot formerly belonged to the Jodhpur Government.

I have, & c.,

(sd.) E.BROWN,
Secretary to the Government of Sind.

No. 327.

Jodhpur, 9th September, 1834.

To,

CAPTAIN BROWN,
Commissioner in Sind,
Hyderabad.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 635 of the 30th *ultimo*, and to inform you that the authorities at this *Darbar* have been requested to send persons with their *Duftars* to Umarkot to meet the officer deputed by His Excellency the Governor in Sind to institute enquiries regarding the boundary in that quarter.

2. I had the honour to address His Excellency on the 2nd of June last in transmitting for His Excellency's information a copy of a letter No. 514 of the 8th of May from the Secretary to the government of India with the Governor-General to the address of the Agent Governor-General for the States of Rajputana on the subject of

measures for preserving the peace of the Jodhpur and Jessulmeer frontiers bordering on Sind and the permission granted to the Maharajah of Jodhpur to reoccupy all the territories he formerly held by his ancestors in the district of Umarkot with the exception of the Fort and the Town, which for the present at least were to be occupied by the British troops. It was further represented to His Excellency through the copies of communications which accompanied my letter, that the requisite announcement had been made on the subject to the Maharajah.

3. Marwar troops are, as you are, doubtless aware, in the neighbourhood of Umarkot only waiting for permission to occupy the district of that name till of late annexed to Sind and which was formerly held by His Highness, ancestors.

4. Whatever information I may be able to gather on the subject of the eastern or western boundary of Umarkot shall be transmitted without delay.

I have, &c.,
(sd.) I. LUDLOW,
Political Agent, Jodhpur

No.100 of 1843.

Kurrachee, 19th September 1843.

To,

I. THOMASON. ESQUIRE,
Secretary to Government of India,
Fort William.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward for submission to the Right Honourable, the Governor-General of India, copy and translation of a petition I have received from the Rana of Umarkot and the Chiefs of Chachera and other in that neighbourhood, expressive of the tyranny they experienced at the hands of the ex-Ameers of Sind and their unwillingness to serve under the Jodhpur Government.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) CHARLES NAPIER.

Enclosure to letter No. 100
of 19th September 1843.

Petition of Mehraj Rana Muljee, Shamsing the chiefs of Chachera and Ruckey Raj and Mahasing, the chiefs of Chellan.

Dated: September 16th, 1843.

From time immemorial Umarkot and the other adjacent country and the Thurr have belonged to our ancestors. Meean Kalora took it from us sixty years ago and gave it over to the Rajah of Jodhpur; he held it for 30 years since when the Meers of Hyderabad have taken possession of the fort of Umarkot and we have held the lands free of tax till the last 15 years. When the Ameers demanded tax, we were unable to fight so we agreed to pay. They demanded the same tax from us as from their other subjects, but the collectors took more and have deceived us. We now petition that you will restore to us the land of our ancestors.

The Balochees have seized the wells in the Thurr which we have spent our wealth in digging formerly: we

had no power so we remained silent, but now we appeal to you for justice.

The Rinds and Khosas are continually plundering us, our property consists of camels of which they have stolen more than it would be possible to enumerate; they have stolen a horse and a camel with the last six months; our wish is to be under the British government and not under any of the Rajah of Jodhpur. When the Rajah of Jodhpur held Umarkot, the fort only was under his order and the surrounding country belonged to us. We wish we may get it.

We were going to Captain Jackson when a Regiment, which was coming from Deesa, not knowing we were friends, fired on us and killed three Thakoores and a guide and plundered Rs. 115 of the property belonging to the dead men. Captain Jackson told us to apply to you for the restoration of our property. The present *Kardar* is committing great tyranny and wants us to pay grain which we have already paid to the Ameers.

True translation,

(Sd.) H.S. RELLY. Lieutenant,
Persian Interpreter.

L(iv) 355—40

No. 342.

Jodhpur, 23rd of September 1843

To,

CAPTAIN BROWN,
Military Secretary to His Excellency

The Governor of Sind,
Hyderabad.

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 635 of 30th *ultimo*, I have the honour to enclose for information a copy of one which I have this day addressed to Captain Malet, and of its enclosure, on the subject of assistance rendered by the *Jodhpur Darbar*, in furtherance of his object of ascertaining points connected with the boundary of Umarkot.

I have & c.,

(Sd.) I. LUDLOW,
Political Agent.

Enclosure No.1 to letter No. 342
of 23rd September 1843.

No. 341.

Jodhpur, 23rd September 1843

To,

CAPTAIN MALET,
Commissioner, Umarkot.

Sir,

With reference to the enclosed copy of a letter No. 635 of the 30th *ultimo*, from Captain Brown, Commissioner in Sind, to my address. I have the honour to transmit for information a copy of a note which I have this day received from the *Vakeel* at this agency representing that a copy of

the Government map of the territory of Umarkot having been taken it is to be sent to you forthwith by the hands of Amansing Chandawat, who will endeavour to obtain from persons on the Frontier all the information which you may desire to posses regarding boundaries. This course has I am assured been found the only practicable one for elciting the desired information as no persons at this capital are at all intimately acquainted with the question upon which you are about to enter.

A copy of this letter will be sent to Captain Brown for information.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) I. LUDLOW,
Political Agent.

Note: Enclosure No.2 to letter No. 322 of 23rd September 1843 being in Persian, is not Printed.

No. 368.

Jodhpur, 14th October 1843.

To,

CAPTAIN BROWN,
Military Secretary to His Excellency
The Governor of Sind.

Sir,

With reference to the objects for which the Jodhpur troops were despatched hence, towards Umarkot some months ago, I have the honour to enclose for the

consideration of His Excellency the Governor of Sind a copy of a note* which I have received from the Jodhpur *Vakeel* representing on the part of his Government that inconvenience and expense are incurred by the protracted stay of the force in its present position and requesting that if it be not the pleasure of His Excellency that it should occupy the territory of Umarkot, authority may be granted for the return of Jodhpur troops to the capital whence they can again proceed to Umarkot on permission being received to that effect.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) I. LUDLOW,
Political Agent.

No. 215 of 1843

Fort William, the 21st October 1843.

To

LIEUT, E. I. BROWN,
Secretary to Government of Sind.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of His Excellency's despatch of tile 19th *ultimo*, No. 100, forwarding a petition from the Rana of Umarkot, and others and in reply to inform you that the Governor-General in Council hopes that His Excellency will, when the demarcation of Frontiers shall be settled, have goodness to communicate any suggestions which may occur to His Excellency with respect to the Rana of Umarkot and the Chiefs of Chachera. When the supremacy over its former territory shall be restored to Jodhpur the Governor-General

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* Not Printed being in Persian.

in Council would be desirous that measure should not be attended with any grievances to the inhabitants, but that they should retain their ancient rights whatever they may have been.

2. The unfortunate event to which the petition refers excited the deepest regret in the mind of the Governor-General in Council, and he would be ready to sanction any measure of compensation for property plundered on the occasion, which the Governor of Sind might think just, and to adopt any means which may seem calculated to soothe the feelings of the relatives of the Chiefs who were killed.

I have the honour to be, Sir.
Yours most obedient servant,

(Sd.) W.EDWARD,
Under Secretary to Government of India.

No 368 of 1843.

To,

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AGENT,
Ajmere.

Sir,

By direction of His Excellency the Governor of Sindh, I have the honour to inform you that Captain Malet of the Bombay cavalry is now employed in marking out the possession of the British Government and Meer Ali Moorad Khan, of the Rajah of Jessulmeer and of the Nawab Bahawalpore as connected with Sind, and His

excellency would therefore wish an Agent to the Rajah of Jessulmeer to be sent to Join Captain Malet.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) E. BROWN,
Secretary to Government of Sind.

No. 164 Of 1844.

Dated: Balmeer, 23rd September 1844

To,

CAPTAIN BROWN,
Secretary to the Government of Sind.

Sir,

Having lately returned from Jodhpur, to which capital I proceeded under authority of the Agent to the Governor-General for the States of Rajputana, upon the subject of the demarcation of Sind and Marwar, I do myself the honour of submitting for His Excellency the Governor's information, documents* enclosed to me by the Political Agent, at the Court of Marwar, bearing upon claims advanced by that principality to territory conquered with Sind and preparatory to proceeding to meet Lieutenant-Colonel Robert's Assistant, upon that portion adjoining his collectorate, beg the favour of His Excellency's orders and instructions upon my future proceedings connected with the reminder of the boundary of Sind and Marwar.

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* Eight enclosures.

The documents herewith transmitted being originals, I have the honour to request that you will be kind enough to return them when no longer required.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) C.F. JACKSON,
Political Superintendent, Multan

Enclosure No.1 letter No. 164
of 23rd September 1844.

No. 345.

Jodhpur, 19th June 1844.

To,

CAPTAIN JACKSON,
Superintendent, Balmeer.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose copies of some papers that passed between Colonel Southerland, Governor-General's Agent, Rajputana, and the Secretaries of the Supreme Government on the restoration of the ancient possessions in Sind of Marwar to His Highness Mahraj Tukht Singh.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) P.T, TRENCH,
Officiating Political Agent, Jodhpur.

Enclosure No.2.

No. 327 of 1843.

Camp Simla, 13th March 1843.

To,

CAPTAIN I. LUDLOW,
Political Agent, Jodhpur.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit for your information a copy of Mr. Secretary Thomason's letter No. 373, dated the 6th instant, with a copy of my reply of this date and would feel obliged by your ascertaining from the Maharajah and reporting whether there are any portions of the territory of Sind, not belonging to Meer Ali Murad of Khyrpoor, which it would be agreeable to the State of Jodhpur to possess.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) I. SOUTHERLAND
Agent, Governor-General.

Enclosure No.3.

No. 373.

Dated 6th March, 1843.

Sir,

The Governor-General is desirous of being informed whether in your opinion there are any portions of the territory of Sind not belonging to Meer Ali Murad of

Khyrpoor which it would be agreeable to the state of Jodhpur, our of Jessulmere to possess.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) **J. THOMASON,**
Officiating Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor-General.

L(iv) 355-41

Enclosure No.4.

No. 326 of 1843.

Camp Simla, 13th March 1843.

To,

J. THOMASON, ESQUIRE,
Secretary to the Government of India
with the Governor-General.

Sir,

I have only now the honour to receive your letter bearing date the 6th instant, No. 373, and beg to submit the following details relating to territory conquered by the Ameers of Sind from Marwar and Jessulmere and in possession of the Ameers of Sind upto the date of the battle of Hyderabad the 17th *ultimo*, although I cannot of course be certain that the details and dates are quite correct.

From Marwar:-

Umerkot: There were originally nine *kots* constituting the Sovereignty of Marwar and Umarkot was one of these. It was conquered by the Sindians and recovered by Marwar in the reign of Maharajah Bijessing

remaining under his sovereignty during the remainder of his reign and during the 12 years reign of Bheemsing. But it was finally lost in the reign of the present Maharajah in Sumbat 1869 thirty years ago.

From Jessulmere:-

Sagur: By Lieut-Colonel N. Campbell's map this place lies nearly west of Jessulmers, distant about 40 miles. It was conquered by the Ameers about 60 years ago in the time of Moolahee, the father of the present Maha-Rawul. Three shares of the territory are said to belong to the Ameers of Hyderabad and two shares to those of Khyrpoor.

Gursea: This place I do not find in any map. It lies in the direction of Hyderabad near Tatteedur about 30 kos from Jessulmere. It was conquered by the Sindians at an earlier period than Sagur and is said to be held by the Ameers in the same share as that Place.

The Frontier of Jessulmere extended to Umer Sing-ka-Kanda, in the direction of Sukkur, during the reigns of Juggut Singh and Uka Singh the great grandfather and grandfather of the present Maha-Rawul. And to Bude Barole, in the direction of Hyderabad during the reign of Moolajee, the father of the present Maha-Rawul.

The Sindians have encroached considerably on these, the ancient frontiers of Jessulmere and those encroachments continued up to the period of the negotiation of her treaty with the British Government.

2. It would of course be highly acceptable to Marwar and Jessulmere to receive back at the hands of the British Government these territories and any other territories of which they may have been deprived by the Ameer of Sind.

3. I cannot of course tell whether there are any other portions of the Territory of Sind not belonging to Meer Ali Murad which it would be agreeable to the States of Jodhpur or Jessulmere to possess. But on this subject shall refer to Captain Ludlow and to the Jessulmere *Durbar;* the result of those references I shall hereafter have the honour of communicating to you.

I have. &.c.,

(Sd.) J.SOUTHERLAND
Agent, Governor-General.

Enclosure No. 5.

No. 514 or 1843.

Dated 13th May 1843.

To,

CAPTAIN LUDLOW
Political Agent, Jodhpur.

Sir,

I have the honour for Col. Southerland to enclose copy of Mr. Secretary Thomason's letter No. 522 of the 8th instant, and to request you will be good enough to lose no time in reporting for the information of the Governor-General the steps taken or proposed by His Highness Maun Singh for the reoccupation of the country in Sind, forcibly seized by the ex-Ameers from the Marwar dynasty some years back.

It is to be hoped that the contents of this letter will have a good effect or the party in the state opposed to our measures regarding the Naths and convince them how free from every feeling of selfishness our proceedings are in regard to Marwar.

(Sd.) P.T. TRENCH,
Assistant Agent, of the Governor-General

Enclosure No.6.

No. 522.

Agra, 8th May 1843.

To,

LIEUT-COL. J.SOUTHERLAND,
Agent to the Governor-General,
Rajputana.

Sir,

The Governor-General is desirous of being informed what measures you propose to adopt upon the territories of Jessulmere and Jodhpur for the propose of controlling the Balochees.

2. It is of much importance that Sher Mohomed and the other Chiefs, who have taken refuge at Shahgurh and elsewhere the edge of the desert, should not be permitted there to organize bands of plunderers for the purpose of directing them either against our territories in Sind or those of allies in Rajwaro.

3. The Governor-General would willingly see the Rawul of Jessulmere again in possession of all the territories of which his ancestors were deprived by the Balochees and the Rawul must see that no more favourable occasion than the present could possibly occur for driving out those foreign invaders and oppressors. The honour and interest of the Raj are equally concerned in now effecting this object. The whole of the territory intervening between the frontier of Jodhpur and the town of Umarkot may now at any time be taken possession of by the Rajah of Jodhpur and the Governor-General would gladly see the Marwarees reinstated in these their ancient dependencies.

4. The Fort or Town of Umarkot must for the present at least as a measure of military precaution be occupied by the British troops, and wherever the British troops may be, the British Government must exercise sole jurisdiction not only over the Fort and Town immediately occupied but over the lands immediately connected with them. With this exception however it is permitted to the Rajah of Jodhpur to reoccupy all the territories formerly held by the ancestors in the District of Umarkot and the Governor-General cordially congratulates the Rajah on an event so honourable to this reign and to his people as the recovery of the ancient territories from the hands of their late barbarous masters.

5. You will assure the Rawul of Jessulmere and the Rajah of Jodhpur that it has been the subject of special satisfaction to the Governor-General that the successes of the British arms in Sind should have led to events which must be so gratifying to their Highness and to their subject.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) J. THOMASON.

Secretary to Government of India
with the Governor-General.

Enclosure No.7.

No. 404.

Jodhpur, 11th July 1844

To,

CAPTAIN JACKSON,
Superintendent, Mullanee.

Sir,

On the 19th June in letter No. 345, I forwarded for your information copies of certain letters that had passed between the Governor-General's Agent and the Supreme Government relating to the restoration of Umarkot Fort, and District to this State; I now have the honour of enclosing a copy of a *Khurreeta* from His Highness to my address on the same subject, also copy of the note addressed by Major Ludlow to this *Durbar* intimating the purpose of the Governor-General to restore Umarkot. This note was written in my former communication.

2. I, likewise, enclose copy of the '*Hydname*' between the Jodhpur, rulers of Sind and the late Maharajah, also extract of a *Furd* which accompanied the Treaty of 1818, between the British Government and this *Durbar* and which has reference to Umarkot.

3. From the information contained in those documents and that you have gathered during your residence here, it is hoped by His Highness you will observe from the *Khurreeta* that you will be able to obtain

for him the complete restoration of all the towers and villages possessed by Marwar in Umarkot.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) P.T. TRENCH,
Political Agent.

Enclosure No.8.

Statement of the *Vakeel* of Jodhpur to Captain Trench, 22nd June 1844.

I enclose sundry documents showing that Umarkot was the property of the Marwar *Sarkar*. I also enclose for your inspection the accounts of revenue and map of Umarkot and its dependencies.

Enclosure No.9.

On the 11th of April of the present year the *Sarkar* of Marwar applied for Umarkot to be restored to them. A letter, dated 20th May, was sent to the British Agent at Marwar by the Secretary of the Governor-General saying that the Governor-General congratulates the Maharajah on recovering Umarkot which belonged to his ancestors, but which has been so long out of his possession.

Enclosure No. 10.

A Treaty sealed by Meer Fateh Allee and Ghoolam Allee states that Umarkot and its dependencies belong to the Maharajah Deerraj an that will not interfere with it in any way.

Enclosure No. 12.

The Maharajah applies for permission to the Governor-General to be allowed to retake Umarkot from the Talpoors by force which he lost three years ago by the treachery of his own people.

Dated 6th January 1818.

Answer.

If you cannot recover by fair means and choose to use force, the British Government will not interfere.

True translation.

(Sd.) PELLY, LIEUTENANT,
Persian Interpreter.

No. 2991 of 1843.

Karachi, 10th October 1844.

To,

CAPTAIN JACKSON,
Political Superintendent,
Mullance.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 164 of the 23rd *ultimo*, relative to the claims to Umarkot advanced by Marwar.

In reply I am directed to state that His Excellency the Governor will not give up to Marwar the Fort or Town of Umarkot nor lands within 5 miles to the east of it. His Excellency with reference to the boundary question between Marwar and Sind have no instructions to give you. On the point you should refer to Colonel Roberts to whom in conjunction with yourself the duty has been assigned. As requested the original enclosures to your letter are herewith returned.

I have, &c.

(Sd.) E. BROWN,
Secretary to Government of Sind.

No. 1091 of 1844.

Hyderabad, 31st December 1844

To,

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF SINDH.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward extract from letter from Lieutenant Forbes regarding an amicable settlement of the feuds at present existing between the Bathees of Mounder and Sodas of our territory.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) A. B. RATHBORNE,
Collector and Magistrate, Hyderabad.

L(iv) 355—42.

Enclosure to letter No. 1091
of 31st December 1844.

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant Forbes, Deputy Collector and Magistrate of Meerpoor, to the Collector and Magistrate of Hyderabad, dated 29th December 1844.

From all I can learn the Mounda Bathees are most anxious amicably to settle all their disputes with the Sodas in our territory. They write that they will do anything that the Governor orders. That they will restore all stolen property and give up the thieves. Advantage, I think, ought to be taken of the fund established for it is nothing else on account of our riots. Our Sodas are just as much to blame, I suspect, as the Bathees and have by all accounts carried off from the neighbourhood of Rinda as much property if not more than they have lost.

Should it meet with His Excellency's approbation if the Jessulmere and Jodhpur Governments would agree, *Panchayat* composed of the principal *Zamindars* or rather Chiefs of Sind, Rajhistan, Jodhpur and Jessulmere who reside near the boundary, would be the best court for these lawless regions and the one most likely to settle all disputes properly. Mallet is much liked by these children of the Desert and if a *Panchayat* was sanctioned would make the best Superintending Officer I know.

True extract.

(Sd.) A. B. RATHBORNE,
Collector and Magistrate.

No. 58 of 1845.

Sukkur, 7th January 1845.

To,

CAPTAIN JACKSON
Political Superintendent,
Balmeer.

Sir,

By direction of His Excellency the Governor of Sind, I have the honour to forward a copy of a letter No. 1091 of the 31st *ultimo* and its enclosure received from the Collector of Hyderabad, and I am directed to state that the plan proposed by Lieutenant Forbes of settling the existing feuds between the Bathees to be a very good one, if it can be arranged.

(Sd.) H. BROWN,
Secretary to Government of Sind.

Khyrpoor, near Buhawalpore,
5th January 1845.

My Dear Brown,

I have come to this part of the country partly on account of boundary disputes between Bahawal Khan and his neighbours—but my reason for this advertising myself, as it were, is not to apprise you of that fact, but is connected with other matters. If, however, in writing to you in this way about them I do what is objectionable, consider this sheet as never blotted but burn it and let me know that

you have done so for my present information and future guidance.

Khubchand, a trader of Buhwlapore, has bewailed to me the joint cases of himself and his brother Dharamdas in Sind. Khubchand was considered by Governor to have done good service in the way of example, etc., in connection with the opening of the navigation of the Indus and generally to have made himself useful to British officers in former times. In 1838 he received a *Khilut* from the Governor-General. After that period he appeared to have lent money to the Hyderabad Ameers (who had payments to make to us) and when, in 1843, their conduct lost them their country, Khubchand says that were in his debts rupees 1,55,000 of Sind currency. He appears to have applied to the Governor of Sind on the subject, and in May last His Excellency appears to have said that cases of the kind had been referred to Calcutta and thence, it was believed, to England.

Khubchand is in debt to our Government through one or more of its Agents on this side (of whom I am not one so situated) and he makes difficulties about paying what is due for native like, he perhaps thinks. We shall be compelled to pay him what he claims from Sind in order to pay ourselves as it were.

I presume that in the case of Sind, Government will make good all ordinary claims against the Ameers as among protected chiefs when any unforeseen cause, or cause which could not be foreseen, deprives them of their possessions, claims against them are listened to which otherwise would never be heeded. Would, therefore, you recommend that Khubchand should once more solicit attention to his case through your office or should he ask

the Governor-General's Agent, N.W. Frontier, to lay it before the Supreme Government.

With regard to the fugitive members of the Khyrpoor family I have been told that the Nawab must understand he is not to allow them a refuge in Buhawalpore but that they should either go to Sir Charles Napier or to Major Broadfeet. The Nawab, I believe, would have us think that those who did enter his territory have now quitted it. But there is some reason to doubt this, so far as I can at Present make out. What is the law in the case? Or the privileges of a Dependent Territory? Are not the fugitive prisoners equally liable to punishment as if they had set foot on ground under one of our own Magistrates.

I shall be at Khyrpoor where the Nawab is in a week (I am going slowly) and a letter directed in Persian and English outside the *Dak* will reach me safely.

My news from Lahore extends to the 28th *ultimo* only. No excesses had been committed. The Sikhs indeed feel that to have tolerated a foreign dominion, such as that of the Dogras of Jammu was disgraceful to them. They feel too that to be strong they must be united and there is also in reality a strong attachment to the mystic Khalsa.

I do not know that my duties will allow me to get to your neighbourhood but I should like much to shake you again by the hand believe me however, very sincerely yours.

(Sd.) J. CUNNINGHAM.

No. 19 of 1845.

Dated Balmeer, 25th January 1845.

To,

CAPTAIN E. BROWN
Secretary to the Governor of Sind.

Sir,

Upon the subject matter of your letter No. 58 of the 7th instant and its enclosure, I have the honour to transmit for the information of His Excellency the Governor of Sind, copies of letters to and from Major C. Thoresby, Agent Governor-General for the States of Rajputana.

A copy of Major Thoresby's letter will this day be transmitted to Captain Mallet for his sentiments as to future proceedings.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) C.T. JACKSON,
Political Superintendent, Mullanee.

Enclosure No.1 to letter No. 19
of 25th January 1845

Jodhpur, 16th January 1845.

To,

CAPTAIN JACKSON,
Political Superintendent, Mullanee.

Sir,

I have the honour to return the original documents enclosed with your letter No.9 of the 5th instant.

2. As the Maha Rawul of Jessulmere is just, at present, absent from his country, on a pilgrimage to the Ganges, I would suggest your communicating with Captain Mallet on the question of the mode in which the disputes that exist between the Sodas and Marwarees can be best adjusted by *Panchayat*, in the first instance, leaving those connected with the Jessulmere territory for subsequent consideration.

3. We may consult the *Durbar* of Jodhpur on whose part you might act, when the most eligible cause of proceedings shall have been determined by you or Captain Mallet.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) C. THORESBY,
Officiating Agent to Governor-General.

Enclosure No.2.

No.9 of 1845.

Dated Jodhpur, 15th January 1845

To,

MAJOR THORESBY,
Agent to Governor-General,
Rajputana.

Sir,

The Jessulmere principality being chiefly concerned, I have the honour to enclose for your consideration and instructions correspondence in original from the Secretary to Government of Sind.

When no longer required may I request the favour of the above documents being returned.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) JACKSON,
Political Superintendent,
Mullanee.

No. 14 of 1845.

Sukkur, 23rd March 1845.

To

CAPTAIN MALLET
Resident, Khyrpoor.

Sir,

I have the honour by direction of His Excellency the Governor to forward copies of a letter and its enclosure No. 19, dated 25th January last, relating to disputes between the Sodas and Bhutees and with reference thereto to request that you will furnish me also the information required by Major Thoresby, Agent to Governor-General for the States of Rajputana.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) E. BROWN,
Secretary.

No. 705 of 1845.

Fort William, 14th March 1845.

To

CAPTAIN E. I. BROWN
Secretary to Government of Sind.

Sir,

"I happen to know though not officially from Sir Charles Napier that Umarkot never belonged to Marwar

With reference to the annexed extract of a despatch, dated 4th October 1844, received from the Officiating Agent at Jodhpur, I am directed to request that you will move His Excellency the Governor of Sind to furnish the Supreme government with any documents or proofs on which His Excellency may have founded the opinion alluded to the Captain Trench that the Fort of Umarkot never belonged to Marwar State.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) W. EDWARDS.
Under Secretary to Government of India.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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[2] Mir Ali 'Sher Qani Thatawi', *Tuhfat al-Kiram*, Hyderabad: 1971, p. 69.
[3] James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Delhi: 1978, ii, p. 68 n. i.
[4] A.W. Hughes, *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind*, London: 1876, pp. 867, 869; H.T. Sorley, *The Gazetteer of West Pakistan, The Former Province of Sind* (Including Khairpur State), Karachi: 1968, p. 160.
[5] Captain S. N. Raikes, *Memoirs on the Thar and Parkar District of Sind*, Reprinted, Karachi: 1977, p. 4.
[6] H. T. Lambrick, *Sind, A General Introduction*, Hyderabad: 1964, Reprinted, 1975, p. 149.
[7] Raichand, p. 651.
[8] Ibid., p. 651.
[9] Ibid., p. 651.
[10] Tod, ii, p. 253; Hughes, p. 868.
[11] Tod, ii, p. 181 n. 1.
[12] Ibid., p. 25, 78 n. 1; Raikes, p. 4.
[13] Ibid., p. 11.
[14] Tod, ii, p. 197.
[15] Raikes, pp. 137-38; E.H. Aitken, *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind*, Karachi: 1907, p. 5.
[16] Tod, ii, p. 181.
[17] Gulbadan Begam, *Humayun Nama*, Ed. by A.S. Beveridge, London: 1909, p. 58; (English), pp. 156-57; Mohamed Kasim Ferishta, *History of the Rise of the Mohammedan Power in India, till the year A.D. 1612*, Eng. Trans. by J. Briggs, Lahore: 1977,i,95.
[18] Mir Ma'sum Bakkari, *Tarikh-i-Ma'sumi*, Poona: 1938, p. 177; *Tuhfat al-Kiram*, p. 124; Khudadad Khan: *Lubb-i-Tarikh-i-Sind*, Hyderabad: 1959, p. 68; Sir Bartle Frere, the Commissioner, visited Umarkot in 1853, after an inquiry from the old men of the town he fixed a stone at the probable birth place of Akbar. But from the original sources it is clear that Akbar was born inside and not outside the fort.

[19] Gulbadan Begum, p. 157; Ferishta, i. p. 95; *Ma'sumi*, p. 178; Sayyid Mir Muhammad b. Sayyid Jalal, Thattawi, *Turkhan Nama*, Hyderabad: 1965, pp. 34-35.
[20] *Tuhfat al-Kiram*, p. 202.
[21] Idraki Beglari, *Beglarnama*, Hyderabad: 1980, pp.29-30.
[22] Ibid., pp. 73-75.
[23] Ibid., pp. 193-96.
[24] Ibid., p. 251; Shaikh Farid Bakkhari, *Dhakhirat al-Khawanin*, Karachi: 1970, ii, p. 710; Shahnawaz Khan, *Ma'athiral-Umara*, Calcutta: 1843, i, p. 710; Khan Khanan's, son Rahim Dad was born from this women.
[25] *Beglar Nama*, pp. 251-60.
[26] *Tuhfat Al-Kiram*, pp. 449-51; Aitken, p. 110; Sorely, p. 167, Ghulam Rasul Mihr, *Tarikh-i-Sind (Ahd-i-Kalhura)*, Hyderabad: 1958, ii, pp. 438-42; Ata Muhammad Shikarpuri, *Taza Nawa-i-Ma'arak*, Karachi: 1959, p. 763; An anonymous poet composed Umarkot's adventure of Nadir Shah in a lucid style, p. 763.

یکے قلعہ بودش عمرکوت نام — بدشت تہی ماندہ ز آب و گنام
بروجش بکیوان بر افراشتہ — بازوقہ وافر انباشتہ
ز آبادی آں قلعہء استوار — چو بددور سی فرسخ از رھگذار
گماں کرد کا فواج ایراں سپاہ — بر آں در نخواھند پیمودہ راہ
بد آں قلعہ آرام کرد و نشست — بخودداری از کین برآوردہ دست
جھانجو چوں آگہ شد از مدعا — کہ او را بود در عمرکوت جا
یکروز و یکشب کہ راہ کرد طی — بہ نزدیک آں قلعہ ہردند پی
گرفتند آں لشکرِ بیکراں — چو خانم عمرکوت را درمیاں

[27] Tod, ii, p. 253; Raikes, pp. 5-6.
[28] Mihr, ii, pp. 575-78.
[29] Ibid., pp. 740-41.
[30] Ibid., pp. 744.
[31] Ibid; pp. 746-47, 752.
[32] Tod, ii, pp. 254-55.
[33] Mihr, ii, pp. 709, 879; Aitken, p. 114; Tod, ii, pp, 254-55, 790.

[34] Ibid., p. 255; Mihr, ii, pp. 851-52.
[35] Ibid., pp. 831-32, 851-52; Aitken, p. 115.
[36] Tod, ii, p. 253; Hughes, p. 118; Sorely, p. 174.
[37] Alexander Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara and a Voyage on the Indus*, London: 1834, Reprinted, Karachi: 1975, iii; p. 214.
[38] James Burnes, *A Visit to the Court of Sind*, London: 1829, Reprinted, Karachi: 1974, pp. 111-12.
[39] Ibid., pp. 111-12; T. Postans: *Personal Observations on Sindh: the Manners and Customs of its Inhabitants; and its Productive Capabilities*, London: 1843, Reprinted, Karachi: 1873, pp.28-29, "this was long looked upon as the depository of the accumulated wealth of the Kalhoras and Talpurs, and the point in which the chiefs would make an invasion of their country."
[40] H.T. Lambrick, *John Jacob of Jacobabad*, London: 1960, Reprinted, Karachi: 1975, p. 94; Hughes, p. 44.
[41] Mohan Lal, *Life of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan of Kabul*, London: 1846, Reprinted, Karachi: 1978, ii, p. 145.
[42] Aitken, p. 138.
[43] Ibid., pp. 138-39.
[44] Khudadad Khan, p. 187. 45.
[45] Ibid., p. 195.
[46] Ibid., p. 201.
[47] Ibid., p. 231.
[48] *Ma' sumi*, p. 208; *Turkhan Nama*. P. 46; Ata Muhammad, p.673.

Relations of Sindh with Central Asia

Although the relations of Sind with Central Asia are very old and could be traced from the Indus civilization when trade was flourishing between the two countries, but in this paper I shall examine the relations established between Sind and Central Asia after the advent of Islam.

The importance of Central Asia in the Islamic World was the result of the downfall of the Abbasids when the small independent provincial kingdoms were established in Central Asia symbolizing the Perso-Turkish nationalism. The capital cities of these states became the centres of learning and they eclipsed the great cities of Baghdad, Damascus, Kufa, and Basra. A number of scholars, poets, and scientists in the hope to get patronization migrated to the burgeoning cities of Central Asia.

The rise of the Ghaznavids and Saljuqs further increased the importance of Central Asia in the fields of politics, literature, and religion. As they were orthodox *sunnis*, they patronized those religious scholars who carried on crusade against the heretic sects of Islam. The Ghaznavids were the first who established close political and cultural relations with Sind. Thus, the relations of Sind with Central Asia could be divided into three categories: Political, Cultural and Commercial.

Political

In the sphere of politics the relations with Central Asia were not happy because a number of invaders and conquerors from Central Asia occupied Sind from time to time and brought miseries and sufferings to the people of Sind. Some military adventurers founded ruling dynasties in Sind and ruled over the country with the help of army, unsympathetic to the local people. Consequently, the political relations with Central Asia left bitterness in the memory of the people of Sind.

At the time of Mahmud of Ghazna (998-1034), Sind was ruled by the Ismaili dynasties. He, as the champion of the orthodox sunni, invaded Multan and Uchh (1025) and defeated the heretic ruler. He also sent an army to conquer Bhakkar and Swistan (1026)[1]. After the conquest of Somnath, he crossed the desert Kutch, besieged Mansurah, the capital of Habbari dynasty, and after plundering, burnt it[2].

When the Ghurids succeeded the Ghaznavids, Muiz al-Din Ghuri appointed one of his slave Nasir al-Din Qubacha as the governor of Multan and Uch (1206-1228). He became independent ruler after the death of the Sultan and occupied Swistan and Debal as well. He conquered all the cities of Sind near to the seacoast. The seven rajas of Sind who ruled different parts of the country recognized Qubacha as their sovereign and paid him tribute[3]. During his reign an unexpected calamity fell upon Sind. Jalal al-Din Khwarizm (1220-31), after the repeated defeats from Chingiz Khan, crossed Indus and arrived in Sind.

> It is a great irony of history that a person who himself was defeated, saw his country devasted and ruined by the Mongols,

witnessed the massacre of innocent people, and wandered from one place to another, the same person brought calamity and misfortune to Sind. Instead of securing a shelter, a place of refuge, a safe corner for him and for his men, he started fight, conquer, and occupy the cities and towns, killing the people, pillaging the countryside, burning villages and towns. He within a short span of time (1221-23) reduced the country to ruins[4].

Another invader form Central Asia indirectly helped Sind to become independent and so it freed itself from the domination of the Sultans of Delhi. Amir Timur invaded India in 1398 and ended the Tughluq rule. The political chaos in Northern India helped Sind to maintain its independence till a new wave of the invaders was to come from Central Asia.

The rise of Uzbeks under Shaibani Khan was an important political event in the history of Central Asia. Shaibani Khan defeated all the Timuri princes one by one and finally expelled them from Central Asia. Babur, after losing his kingdom of Farghana, tried to carve another kingdom in Afghanistan. In his attempt to extend his rule, he came into conflict with Shah Beg Arghun, the ruler of Qandhar. Shah Beg under the constant pressure of Babur, left Qandhar and attempted to found a small kingdom for him and for his men by conquering Shal and Sivi. As the income from these parts was very low, it became difficult for him to maintain his army. Therefore, he decided to conquer Sind. The internal conflicts of the Samma ruling family made his job easy and occupied all-important towns of Sind one by one and established his rule.

The Arghun was the first dynasty from Central Asia which brought Sind under its domination and introduced the Chingizi and Timurid traditions which they maintained throughout their rule. The Arghuns and their successor Tukhans recognized the Timurids as their overlords and continued the name of the Mughul Emperors of India to be recited in the *Khutba*.

The Arghuns as a foreigner were unsympathetic to the local people and ruthlessly crushed all opposition against them. Their arrival changed the whole political structure of Sind because they brought not only a great number of soldiers and administrators but also poets and scholars, who formed a privileged class having no or little contact with the local people.

The Arghuns were followed by the Turkhans under whom Sind was divided into two parts: lower Sind with Thatta as its capital ruled by Isa Khan Turkhan (1555-1566) and upper Sind with Bhakkar as its capital ruled by Sultan Mahmud Khan (1555-1574). Sultan Mahmud Khan in order to counter the Mughul Emperors of India, tried to maintain good relations with the Safawi Kings of Persia and sent a number of embassies with precious gifts. In exchange he also received gifts from the Persian King[5].

The Turkhan rule came to an end when Sind was conquered by the Mughuls and the last ruler of the Turkhans, Jani Beg (1585-1592) became a Mansabdar at the Mughul Court. His son Ghazi Beg became a favourite of Jahangir and was appointed as a governor of Qandhar. In this capacity, he remained in Qandhar from 1608 to 1612.

After a lapse of considerable time, Sind's relations with Central Asia became worst. Nadir Shah invaded India and defeated Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), the Mughul ruler, who after the defeat, ceded to Nadir Shah all parts of

his empire to the west of the river Attock Darajat Shikarpur, Bhakkar, Swistan, Nasrpur and Thatta[6]. After that Nadir Shah demanded tribute from Mian Nur Muhammad (1719-1753), the Kalhora ruler of Sind, and asked him to come to Kabul to pay homage. When he did not comply, Nadir Shah invaded Sind in 1740. Mian Nur Muhammad took refuge in Umarkot. Nadir Shah followed him and besieged the fortress. Seeing no hope, Mian Nur Muhammad surrendered and paid him one crore of rupees along with some other precious gifts with a promise to pay him annual tribute of rupees 20 lakhs. Three sons of Nur Muhammad were taken hostages[7].

Nadir Shah further weakened Sind by dividing it into three parts: Sibi was given to Muhabbat Khan Bruhi, the ruler of Qilat: Shikarpur to Sadiq Muhammad Khan Daudpotra; and rest of Sind to Mian Nur Muhammad. Thus, Sind suffered immensely after the invasion of Nadir Shah who took away all the accumulated treasury of Sind and weakened it politically and financially. Nadir Shah was assassinated on 1747 and Ahmad Shah Abdali succeeded his possessions of Afghanistan and India including Sind. In 1748, he arrived India and conferred the title of Shahnawaz Khan to Mian Nur Muhammad and ordered him to pay tribute to Qandhar hereafter. Nur Muhammad sent an embassy to the Afghan King under Bhai Khan Kalhora along with costly gifts[8]. He also appointed Mahfuz Sarkhush as his *Wakil* to the Court of Qandhar who remained there from 1754 to 1755.

In 1753, Abdali invaded Sind on the pretext of non-payment of tribute. The ruler of Sind, finding himself weak to defend the country, sent an embassy under Gido Mal, who negotiated with the Afghan king and promised to pay the tribute regularly. However, it appears that the tribute was never paid in full and in time[9].

The relations of Sind with the successors of Ahmad Shah Abdali remained chequered. The Afghan kings interfered in the internal conflicts of Sind such as succession to the throne and supported their own candidates. Their only interest was to get as much money as possible. As the government of Sind was weak and could not afford to have a strong army, it complied all unjust demands of the Afghan kings. Every member of the Kalhora family aspired to become king after bribing the Afghan king. The usual practice was to promise to pay more tribute in order to get the support. It was also the practice of the Afghan kings to keep sons of the ruler of Sind as hostages.

The policy of the Kalhora rulers to submit to the Afghan Court and not to defend the country against the invasion clearly shows the inherent weakness in the Kalhora dynasty which came into power without the support of the people and whose rule depended either by the grace of the Mughul Emperors or the Afghan Kings. The repeated humiliation did not impel them to muster their resources and recruit people to fight against the foreign domination. Even the Talpurs inherited the same resilient policy.

The repeated Afghan invasions caused immense losses to Sind. One of the severe blows was the invasion of Madad Khan, who came to support the claim of Abdul Nabi (d. 1805), the last ruler of the Kalhora, against the Talpurs. He ruthlessly massacred and plundered the country and left such bitter memories that even to day his brutal actions are remembered and have become a part of Sindhi folk songs.

The last catastrophe came from Afghanistan in the form of Shah Shuja, who arrived in Sind after his defeat in

1803. He stayed at Shikarpur and made preparation to take back his throne. His stay at Shikarpur proved disastrous to the people of the city who suffered because of his greediness and licentiousness. The Mirs of Sind made an agreement to Sardar Azam Khan, the then ruler of Afghanistan, to oust Shah Shuja from Sind. In 1820-21, Azam Khan came to Sind and demanded the arrears of the tribute from the Mirs of Sind. The amount was so high that the Mirs could not pay and in a new agreement the city of Shikarpur was ceded to the Afghan king. Shah Shuja fled to the Punjab. He came back again in 1832-33 with the help of the English who were interested to place him on the throne. The Mirs were pressurized to pay the arrears of their tribute to Shah Shuja in order to finance the campaign[10]. Thus, the entry of the English on the soil of Sind terminated its political relations with Afghanistan and Sind became a prey to the Britishers.

Cultural Relations

The Cultural relations of Sind with Central Asia are closely intermingled with politics. The political upheavals and crisis in Central Asia caused a number of scholars, *ulemas*, poets, scientists and a number of noble families to migrate and settle in Sind. The Mongol devastation, the rise of the Uzbeks and the coming of the Afghan kings were significant events which forced new immigrants to come to Sind.

The Mongol invasions uprooted the Muslim kingdoms of Khwarizm, Khurasan, Persia and Afghanistan. As a result, a number of the royal families nobles, religious scholars, poets and mystics came to Sind to find refuge and patronization. As the roads from the North-West of the Punjab were not safe due to the Khokhar tribe, the immigrants first came to Uchh and Multan and then

proceeded either to Sind or northern India. Most of these people stayed in Sind as they were welcomed by Nasir al-Din Qubacha, who provided them generous grants. When Qutb al-Din Kashani, a leading religious scholar arrived in Multan, he built for him a *Madrassa*[11]. Similarly, when the famous historian Minhaj Siraj reached Uchh from Khurasan in 1226, the charge of the Madrass-i-Firuziya was given to him. Besides these religious scholars, famous literary personalities arrived at the court of Qubacha. The famous poet Sadid-al-Din Ufi, the author of *Jawama al-Hikayat* and *Lubab-al-bab* reached his court in 1227. He was patronized by the *Wazir* of Qubachah, Ain al-Mulk Fakhr al-Din. The Wazir enjoyed the reputation as a patron of art and literature. Ali Kufi translated *Chachnama* or *Fathnama* under his patronage. Besides these scholars, we find the names of poets as Shams al-Din Muhammad al-Katin and Diya al-Din Sajazi[12].

The Samma ruler Jam Nizam-al-Din (1461-1509) used to invite the scholars from Central Asia and generously awarded them. On hearing fame of Maulana Jalal al-Din, he requested him to come to his court. The Maulana himself could not come but sent two of his pupils Mir Shams al-Din and Mu'in al-Din. Makhdum Abd al-Aziz Abhari and two of his sons came to Sind during this period[13].

The Samma rulers provided facilities to all those immigrants who arrived in Sind after the rise of the Uzbeks. They were inhabited in a separate part of Thatta known as Mughul-wara[14].

The great influx of the refugees came along with the Arghuns. The Arghuns conquest of Sind replaced the whole ruling classes of Sind by the foreigners. All posts of the government and administration were occupied by the new

immigrants. The locals were excluded from all government services and were deprived of the best lands which were granted as *Jagirs* to the Arghun and Turkhan nobles. By constructing mosques, gardens, palaces, tombs, bridges, and wells, they changed the face of the country. Besides these nobles, numerous *ulema*, scholars and poets arrived during the time of the Arghuns and the Turkhans. Mir Ali Sher Qani' gives details of these persons in *Tuhfat al-Kiram* and *Maqalat al-Shu'ara*.

During the Kalhora period when the relations with Afghanistan (or Khurasan as it was called during that time) were close: a large number of Afghan tribes settled in Sind and especially Shikarpur became a large Afghan settlement. Popalzai, Peheni, Barakzai, Nurzai, Kakazia, Durrani and Ghilzaj were the prominent tribes who inhabited Sind[15]. As a result of war of succession or court intrigues, the Afghan princes used to take refuge in Sind. They were always accompanied by a large number of scholars and poets. A detail of such poets is available in the *Takmila-i-Maqalat-i-Shu'ara* by Khalil.

The arrival of a large number of these foreigners changed the cultural life of Sind. Most of these immigrants settled in big cities such as Bhakkar, Rohri, Thatta, Sehwan and Nasrpur and revolutionized the pattern of urban life by a new style of living. They had their separate *mohallas* in the cities as Mughulwara, Bazar-i-Mirzai and Bazar-i-Agar. They laid down the foundation of the gardens on the pattern of their homeland. Sultan Mohmud Khan built Babarlu garden[16]. Such gardens were in abundance in Thatta, Bhakkar and Jun. They were decorated with tanks of different geometrical patterns, paved pathways, pavilions, *khilwat khana* (private house) consisting of lattice screen[17].

They introduced Central Asian fruits. The melons grown from the seeds of Kabul were known as Wilayati melons. Pomegranates and apples were first brought by the immigrants[18].

The influence of Central Asia in music, poetry, painting and architecture is very deep and lasting. In the art of cooking, style of dress, and social manners they maintained their own individuality. The urban culture flourished under the ruling classes of the immigrants became alien to the local culture because the majority of the local people resided in the villages and small towns. The foreign rule created a gulf between the foreigners and the locals politically and culturally. The locals were regarded inferior culturally and treated with contempt. Socially they were boycotted and had not equal status in the society. Urban and rural population remained pole apart culturally from each other. An urban culture flourished under the official patronage, while the local culture remained neglected. The example of the Persian language could be cited as a cultural difference. It was the official language of the governing classes and flourished as a result of the official patronage. The local Sindhi language remained neglected and waited for centuries to be revived by the English.

The immigrants tried to maintain purity of race and did not mix with the locals through marriage. In case of marriage with a local, the social status of the family was downgraded. Even living in Sind after centuries, the people were proud of their foreign ancestry. The cultural imperialism imposed by the immigrants crushed all creativenesses of the locals and reduced them to ignorant masses. Culturally they became alien in their own soil.

The mystic from Central Asia also influenced the religious life of the people of Sind. *Suhrawardiya* was the first mystic order which was established in Sind. The Sumras, Sammas and Langhas were under the influence of this order. The Arghuns invited saints of the *Qadiriya* and *Naqshbandiya* orders to weaken the influence of the *Suhrawardiya* who were not in favour of their rule. These two orders were very orthodox and started a crusade against other sects contrary to their beliefs such as the Ismailis and Mahdawis[19].

Another important group which had great impact on the socio-cultural life of Sind was the Sadats (the family of the holy prophet) who arrived in Sind through Central Asia. As the Sadats were respected by the rulers and special treatment was given to them, there was an influx of the Sadats families. All those who came from Bukhara were the Sayyids and in the Indian subcontinent Bukhari became synonymous to Sayyid. During the Kalhora period only, there were 12 major Sayyid families besides the minor ones in the city of Thatta. The Sadats enjoyed special privileges in the society. They were awarded Jagirs, appointed on all religious posts such as *Qazi, Shaikh al-Islam, Sadr* and *Mufti*. Most of them were religious leaders with a large number of following among the local people who used to present them gifts and annual share from their crops. They maintained their purity of race in order to preserve their privileges.

Commercial Relations

Commercial relations played an important role in bringing Sind and Central Asia close to each other. The trade was conducted by land routes as well as by river Indus. The land route which was used by caravans was from Bhakkar via Sehwan to Qandhar and Turkestan. The

route was used only once a year because it was not safe in the presence of the Panni tribe who always waited for an opportunity to plunder the passing caravans[20].

Later on when Shikarpur became a trading centre, the caravans for Central Asia started their journey from this city and after crossing Bolan pass reached Qandhar and then proceeded further to Marv, Herat and Turkestan. Usually camels were used to carry goods. A contingent of soldiers accompanied to protect the caravans. The merchants had to pay numerous custom duties levied by the local chiefs. The time of departure of a caravan from Shikarpur was in the month of March. It came back from Central Asia in December or January[21]. Apart from land route, the river Indus was used to carry merchandise by boats as far as it was navigable.

The goods which were exported from Sind to Central Asia were cotton, woolen textile, rice, ghee, opium, indigo, leather, silk manufactured goods, salt and saltpeter. Later on, besides its own products, Sind also exported the products of British India such as printed cloths, chintzes, velvet, brocade cloths, metals, sugar, groceries and spices[22]. Sind imported from Central Asia raw silk, dried fruits, horses, dyes, gold in ducats and thread for embroidery and a special cotton as was described by Postans: "a fine kind of cotton used for intricate embroidery is highly prized and brought in limited quantities from Khorassan or Herat. It is called Nirma." Turquoise was brought from the mines of Nishapur. Postans writes:

> "Its is in such a universal demand and so cheap and plentiful that all classes even the poorest peasant's wife or children in the country dorn themselves with Firozis, as the stones are called[23]."

The commercial activities increased the importance of Shikarpur and it was designated as one of the gates of Khurasan. Postans observes: "there is no place in the whole line of Indus which exercised such immediate and extensive influence on commerce of Central Asia as, Shikarpur"[24]. Postans further testified that the Shikarpur merchants had commercial transaction to every market from Indus to Central Asia[25]. The credit of the Shikarpur brokers was so high that all their bills could be encashed in every part of India and Central Asia[26]. A particular group of merchants known as the Multani were principal bankers who carried trade with Kabul, Qandhar and Turkestan[27].

Conclusion

After the conquest of Sind by the English, the political relations of Sind with Central Asia came to an end. The commercial relations gradually declined due to political and scientific changes. Only the impact of the cultural relations remained deep and lasting. The cultural traditions survived through all vicissitude and retained inspite of integration.

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Reinterpretation of Arab Conquest of Sindh

Generally in the history books the cause of the Arab invasion of Sindh is described as the imprisonment of women and children of Arab families who were coming from Sri Lanka by the sea pirates near Debal, presumably with the approval of the ruler of Sindh. An Arab girl at the time of imprisonment sent a plea for help to Hajjaj, who was the governor of Basrah. On hearing about this incident and the plea of the girl, he decided to punish the ruler and get the Arab prisoners released. However, a thorough analysis of this account reveals many weaknesses and flaws. Hajjaj, a shrewd politician and experienced general who has been negatively portrayed in the history by the historians of the Abbasid period as a tyrant and despot because of his Umayyad affiliation, could not take action to invade Sindh merely on the plea of a girl. He was not the man to be carried away by emotions and sentiments. On the contrary, he took the decision after weighing the pros and cons of the case.

Therefore, there were other important reasons that compelled him to undertake the venture. First of all, the Arabs had made many attempts to conquer Sindh but failed to achieve their objective because there was no immediate need to occupy it for military or political reasons. However, during the Umayyad period it became possible because after the conquest of Makran, the land route became safe and a large army could be sent without any danger and obstacle. Moreover, by the time of the 8th century, the Arab merchants had established close trade and

commercial relations with the coastal towns of south India and Sri Lanka and established their settlements in a number of places. Therefore, the presence of sea pirates near the port of Debal and the capture of the ship alarmed the merchant community. Their concern was safety of the sea route. Apparently, that was the reason that Hajjaj decided to send expeditions to Sindh to conquer and to occupy it in order to protect the interest of the Arab merchants.

Historians also give credit to Muhammad Bin Qasim for the conquest of Sindh and especially emphasise his youth as a factor for his achievements. The close study of the *Chuchnama* or *Fathnama* shows that, in reality, Muhammad Bin Qasim was just a figurehead and the real authority was in the hands of Hajjaj who conducted the whole expedition sitting in Basrah commanding the young general. We find that Muhammad Bin Qasim asked Hajjaj for everything: how to deal with the vanquished people, how to cross the river, how to talk with the tribal chiefs and how to make arrangements in the battlefields. He never dared to take any action independently. In this regard the decision of Hajjaj on the treatment of the Sindhi Hindus and Buddhists is very significant. When Muhammad Bin Qasim asked him how they should be treated, Hajjaj wrote to him that they should be treated as people of the book like the Zoroastrians of Persia and after paying *jizya*, they should be given the status of *Zimmis*. That was the model that later on the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughal Emperors adopted in India.

It is also evident from the original sources as al-Baldhuri and the *Chuchnama* that the main motive of the expedition was not religious but economic and political. It was the period when the Umayyads were busy in conquering Central Asia, North Africa and Spain. The expansion meant acquiring more land and more resources. After the conquest of Multan, Muhammad Bin Qasim got accumulated wealth from the city temple. Hajjaj happily

reported to the caliph that he was paying back to the state treasury three times more than what he had loaned for the expedition. This statement clearly shows the economic rather than religious or humanitarian interests of the conquest of Sindh.

Another question that requires analysis is how Islam spread in Sindh? The study shows that it spread not because of the efforts of the rulers but because of the social, political and economic reasons of those who converted to Islam. In Sindh, the majority of population were Buddhists and, therefore, the control of Brahmanism was weak. The tribal system also did not integrate them into one coherent group. Thereby, this tribal division made it easy for the people to convert and sought the support of the Arab rulers against their rivals. We find a pattern of conversion in Sindh; once a tribal chief became Muslim, the whole tribe followed their chief and converted to Islam as an expression of their loyalty.

Another feature of the Arab conquest of Sindh is that in spite of the occupation and remaining a part of the Caliphate for 150 years, the Arabic language could not become the *lingua franca*.

This is quite contrary to the other regions which came under the Arab control such as North Africa where the local languages were eliminated and Arabic became the predominant language of the people. Why did this not happen in Sindh? A close study shows that as a result of the Eastern conquests, the Arabic language kept its hold up to Iraq, but Iran, Khurasan and Central Asia resisted to accept Arabic and persisted to continue to speak their local languages. Sindh also followed the tradition of resistance and kept its local languages alive.

Looters are 'great men' in History!

I read with interest the article The Great hero: Sultan Jalaluddin Shah by Dr N.A Baloch, praising and admiring the sultan of his 'courage, unconquerable will and single-minded devotion to the great cause'.

It is surprising that in the historiography of Pakistan, the conquerors and invaders are always glorified, admired and great achievements are attributed to them generously with high and sounding titles such as 'Great', 'Illustrious' and 'Magnificent'.

The historians are still fascinated by the theory of 'Great Men' as the makers of people's destiny and those who change the course of history.

Recently, the Institute of Texla, which is based in Islamabad, organized seminars to celebrate the victories of the great conquerors. A conference on the Ghaznavid period in Lahore and a seminar on Shihabuddin Ghori in Islamabad were held to project these two conquerors as 'Great men' and 'Great heroes'. Why so much attention on the role of the conquerors? Why so much glorification of wars and victories? Perhaps because we are a nation that, in recent history, has been conquered and subjugated repeatedly by our own conquerors, and that has made us so humble that we, as a people, have lost our integrity and honour and completely surrendered our fate to the 'Great' individuals as our protectors and defenders.

There might be another reason for admiring the conquerors that, we, as a nation, have achieved nothing in our recent history; therefore, the past glories are a great

source of satisfaction. It gives us a false notion of greatness and dignity. .

Whatever be the cause, we reduce our historiography to wars and the narratives of invaders and ignore the rest.

Interestingly, still the approach to write history is from the above and not from the below. The result is that our historians focus their attention on the role of a great person and completely neglect what happened to the common men as a result of fulfillment of great men's ambitions and goals. At the cost of peoples' sufferings and sacrifices, the rulers become great heroes in history. There is a need to change this approach and to highlight the crimes and follies of these great men.

Take the example of Jalaluddin Khwarizm Shah who arrived in India after his repeated defeats by Chengiz Khan, the Mongol ruler. He asked Sultan Iltutmish, then the ruler of India, for help. The sultan was a wise and shrewd politician and had no intention to involve himself in Jalaluddin's affairs and fight his war. Finding no help, the fugitive prince turned towards Multan and Uchh which were ruled by Nasiruddin Qubacha (re. 1206-1228) a benevolent ruler who worked hard to promote prosperity of his people.

Jalaluddin, after making alliances of the local tribes, defeated Qubacha and forced him to pay huge amount for his expenses. Jalaluddin later burnt Uchh and left for Sehwan. The governor of Sehwan, finding himself weak, surrendered the city to the aggressor. Jalaluddin stayed there for a month and then marched towards Thatta. On the way he committed all kinds of cruelties: massacring, pillaging, and plundering every town that belonged to Qubacha. He occupied Thatta in 1223 and plundered the environs of the city. He also looted the city of Debal.

It is a great irony of history that a person who was defeated and his country devastated and ruined by the

Mongols, witnessed the massacre of innocent people, and wandered from place to place for shelter, instead of learning any lesson, brought calamity and misfortune to the people of Sindh. He, within a short span of time (1221-1223), reduced the country to ruins. When he departed from Sindh, he left it devastated and burnt.

The impact of his stay proved disastrous not only to the common people of Sindh but also affected the internal politics of the Indian subcontinent.

Sultan Nasiruddin Qubacha, who consolidated his position and became very popular among his subject, militarily became very weak after his encounters with Jalaluddin and subsequently lost his throne and kingdom fighting against Iltutmish. Secondly, Jalaluddin also brought the Mongol hoards that came to India in his search, and not finding him plundered the country, thus opening India for the Mongols invasions.

They, throughout the Sultanate period, remained a constant threat to the security of India until they were ruthlessly defeated and crushed by Alauddin Khilji.

Jalaluddin left India unceremoniously. He achieved nothing against the Mongols. As far as the Indian history is concerned, there is no high place for him. He is just an invader and marauder who brought miseries and sufferings to common people and plunged the country in turmoil.

Therefore, history must be put in a correct form, only then we can control present and future course of our history. How many Qasims, Ghaznavis and Ghoris do we need?

Last week when I was passing through the Lahore Mall, I saw a banner flattering with a bold headline 'We welcome Parvez Musharraf as a modern Muhammad bin Qasim'. The banner was manifest of historical consciousness of our society. I started wondering why our nation always thinks in terms of a strong man as a deliverer? Why do we construct a past that entirely belongs

to the conquerors and invaders? Why do we remember Mahmud of Ghazna and not al-Biruni, Ibn-e-Sina or Firdausi? This attitude and approach to cognate history is reflective of the psyche of our people shaped by continuous manipulation of history by the state.

Political history, as a major discipline, dominates our textbooks on history. Popular history fiction by writers like Sharar or Nasim Hijazi contains Muslim heroic figures who embody the essentials of a brave hero to crush the enemy and manifest courage, magnanimity and tolerance towards the oppressed. Such qualities, by the end of the narrative, are rewarded by way of marrying the hero off to a beautiful woman, who is generally a non-Muslim.

Equally fascinating is the play of historical films that heighten the drama of war and conquest to popularise the past events that gratify the sense of history in popular consciousness. Naturally, such commercial ventures fetch enormous amount of money to producers and film industry at large.

Muhammad b. Qasim, Mahmud of Ghazna and Shihabuddin Ghori emerged as powerful symbols in Muslim politics in the context of the 1930s' communal atmosphere in India. Interestingly, they continue to be used as symbols of perfect Muslim heroes who have the ability to restore peace and order through their belligerence. Such manipulation is, of course, suitable to those rulers who seize power by force. They legitimize their rule by manipulating figures of war and power from our past. The grave impact of which is that our past, not just in popular consciousness, but in academics and school education, is reduced to a past of conquerors and aggressors. Not surprisingly then it has the strongest appeal to the people. Such a version of history gives our society a temporary sense of pride and a satisfaction in bygone greatness nurtures self-delusion and escape in the past that lives no more.

The 18th century was the turning point in the history of the Muslim societies. Owing to the process of colonization, the Safavids, the Mughals and the Ottomans were on the decline. Having lost the power and prestige, Muslim societies harked back to their past glories to find images of victors and conquerors who had built great empires. Such imagination was a kind of redemption from colonial bondage, and a source of hope that such heroic personas would redeem them from political enslavement, social and cultural decay. The Indian Muslims imagined the Ottoman Empire to be a powerful constant.

Undoubtedly it had projected power during the time of Sultan Muhammad Fateh and Sulaiman the Magnificient, but its position in the political world in the twentieth century had changed. Not recognizing such a change, the Indian Muslims acclaimed the Ottoman Caliph as their protector. During the Balkan wars in 1912-13, Maulana Azad's paper *al-Hilal* started to publish the heroic encounters of the Turkish generals who fought against the Christians. It served as an inspiration to the Muslim community in India. However, the defeat and surrender of the Caliph in the First World War greatly disappointed them.

In an atmosphere of loss and grief when Ghazi Anwar Pasha got killed in his mission to unite all the Turkish-speaking people in Central Asia, the Indian Muslims turned him in to a *mujahid* and later a martyr. The other hero that emerged as a victor was Mustafa Kamal who restored the lost dignity of the Turkish nation by defending his country against the allied invasion. Both Pasha and Kamal, despite their antithetical views, became the heroes of the Muslims of the subcontinent. Out of these two, Mustafa Kamal continues to be a model for Muslim rulers and leaders. Raza Shah, the founder of Pahlawi dynasty of Iran, and Amir Habibullah of Afghanistan, had the aspiration to emulate him to modernize their countries

but circumvented the process of modernization due to their involvement in corruption. Similarly Jinnah, Ayub and now Paervez Musharraf aspire to espouse the values of Ataturk, the great man and hero.

Ataturk, however, is viewed as a destroyer of religion and tradition by the religious extremists. His endeavour to secularize and modernize Turkey is anathema to the bearers of religious extremism. The religious extremist parties have rejected Ataturk as their hero and take pride in the figures of Muhammad b. Qasim, Mahmud of Ghazna and Shihabuddin Ghori. They also became relevant in the context of Indian-Pakistani conflict: the conquerors who defeated the Hindus and propagated and established Islam in the Indian subcontinent. This also shows that the historical consciousness of our people is still tilted towards the belief in physical power, not realizing that the days of physical power are over and intellectual creativeness and technological innovation reign supreme.

The consequences of hero worship have resulted in disaster for Pakistan. Following the footsteps of the conquerors, the rulers of Pakistan treated it as a conquered country and, therefore, legitimized plunder and loot of its wealth and resources. The only difference between them and the modern conquerors is that in the past the wealth was taken away from India and deposited in the state treasuries of Damascus, Baghdad and Ghaznin. Now the Swiss banks or American and Western countries provide safe heaven to the plundered wealth. How can we condemn the modern heroes when we admire the ones of the past on the same deeds? If we justify hero worship, then we have to condone not only their plunder but also endure their rule and sacrifice each and everything to make them great and powerful.

Index

A

B

C

D

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

P

Q

R

S

U

W

Y